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LENNY IS MADE AN ORPHAN.

JENNY, THE ORPHAN;

OR,

Trials and Triumphs.

BY

MARGARET HOSMER,

Author of "Cherry, the Missionary," "Year in the Sunday-School," "The Voyage of the White Falcon," &c. &c.

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CHILDREN'S ROOM
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THE

ADVENTURES OF LITTLE LENNY.

CHAPTER FIRST.

LENNY IS MADE AN ORPHAN.

ONE cold November night, when the frost lay thick upon the ground, and the air was chilly with the breath of coming winter; the fire-bells began to strike, and a red flame shot up, and brightened the sky that overspread the southern part of a great city.

There were few fine dwelling-houses in that neighborhood, for it bordered close upon the river, and, besides stores and warehouses, was

chiefly occupied by hotels and cheap lodgings. It was a tenement in use in this capacity that had taken fire, and was now blazing with mad fury, owing to the wooden outhouses and other inflammable material connected with it. The value of the building itself was not great, and it was poorly and scantily furnished; but it was crowded with human beings, who, owing to the sudden and destructive character of the fire, were not alive to their peril, until almost all hope of escape was cut off. Shrieks of fear and anguish rose above the roaring of the flames, and cries of entreaty from the already rescued in behalf of those left in danger, mingled in wild confusion; while the firemen, running to and fro with their loud shouts, rendered the scene one of terrible excitement.

Half-clad figures were lowered by ropes and bed-clothes from upper windows, and, shivering and frightened, sought refuge in the adjacent warehouses, which were humanely opened for

their temporary reception. The street shone as in the light of midday, and the white and terrified faces of the poor souls just snatched from danger, looked fearfully up at the tottering flame-wreathed building, and scarcely in their scattered senses realized their own escape.

The steady jets of water poured down upon the flames without any apparent effect; they only seemed to mock such feeble resistance and rage still higher, till by-and-by the half-consumed frame-work fell in with a crash, and burning fragments of the wood were scattered round, glowing for a little while, then yielding to the spashing streams from the engines, and expiring in black charred logs and burnt splinters.

Kind people from the hotels came hurrying in to aid the half-clothed beings who had taken shelter in the stores, and many good unselfish actions proved the beauty of human charity and sympathy in trouble.

Standing in the midst of a group of women

and children in the nearest shelter to the burnt building, was a little boy, five or six years old, but small of his age, barefooted and without any clothing except a long nightgown.

His eyes were wide open, and expressed terror and dismay; his face was singularly white and rigid for his age, and the fixed look it wore was painfully unnatural.

"Who is this little soul?" asked a stout good-humored woman kindly, as she drew him towards some casks that were rolled on their sides against the wall, and lifted him up that she might look in his face.

"Lord bless the child!" she exclaimed, as she touched his flesh; "he is stone cold, and white as a ghost; where's your mother, my pet?"

The child's face began to work as if with a spasm, and his breast heaved convulsively, but he made no sound.

Some of the women came forward and looked at him, but none recognised him as part of their

families. At last a little girl of twelve or thereabouts said, suddenly remembering his face, "Why, he's that pale lady's child that came in the cars with us to-day; don't you know him, auntie? Where's your mamma, Lenny?"

At this question, repeated by one whom he seemed to remember, the boy broke out into a low long cry of desolate misery that went to every listener's heart; and the woman the girl called Auntie exclaimed, clasping her hands with a countenance of horror:—

"She was a lame lady, and she was left in the burnt house. She had had a fall that hurt her terribly, and so she could not escape from the flames!"

In a moment every one joined in the outcry, and most of them, disregarding their appearance and the uselessness of the task, rushed out to make a frantic search in the glowing ruins, but were withheld by the calmer by-standers, who made inquiries on all hands as to when the missing

woman had last been seen, and at length convinced themselves, beyond a hope to the contrary, that she was indeed lost in the flames.

Meantime the kind woman who had first noticed the desolate child, held him close in her arms, and tried to still his piteous sobbings, that, though not loud or shrill, shook his little frame with their deep smothered force.

"Lenny," she said soothingly, "Lenny dear, listen to me. I have a little boy at home that will be glad to play with you, and you shall sleep in his little bed with him, and have breakfast in his high chair."

"No! no! no!" sobbed the child passionately; "I want mamma—I don't want to play!"

"How was the child saved?" asked a gentleman who stood, with a large cloak wrapped round him, in the centre of the warehouse. He was a fine martial-looking man, with a great moustache and sunbrowned complexion, and seemed much more like a soldier than a merchant. His name

was Brenthurst, and he was the proprietor of the large commission house where the frightned creatures had taken refuge at his invitation. One of the firemen, who had sprained his ankle jumping from a ladder, and now sat bandaging it on the floor, answered him in a low tone, evidently anxious to keep the little boy from hearing his words.

"I saw the woman at the back window; she was waving her hands, but I couldn't hear her voice. I tried to get to her, but the fire was so hot on that side we couldn't climb. We made signs to her to come to the front, and she seemed to understand us, for in a minute she was at the only window left on the river side, holding the little fellow in her arms. I tried to get up the ladder, but lost my foot-hold and came down in a heap. I saw Jim Morris and another fellow there, and called to him to make haste up and save the poor souls, when I came to myself, for I was stunned with the knock on the bricks. I saw this little chap in his night-gown and bare feet, so I

picked him up and hobbled in here with him, not knowing where his mother was."

Mr. Brenthurst hurried out on hearing this, and the woman who had taken the boy still kept hushing him in her arms and waiting for the sequel, for she felt sure the merchant had gone to find Jim Morris, and hear from him what really was the poor woman's fate. In a few moments he returned, saying sadly and solemnly:—

"It is too true, young man; the flooring gave way as your friend caught the child, and the poor woman fell through just as their hands were stretched out to save her, and lies buried in the burning ruins."

It might have been the tone so full of sorrow and regret, or it might have been their troubled faces, but the bereaved child seemed to realize what had happened as well as they who spoke of it in undertones—for he cried out—

"Mamma! mamma! I want my mamma!" in such heartrending entreaty that no one had the

courage to answer him, or tell him he was motherless.

"I suppose there will be an inquiry, and his relatives will make themselves known," said the woman who held him in her arms, "till then I'll take him home with me. I have a boy of my own, who may be able to comfort him better than an older person could do."

Mr. Brenthurst knew her very well; she was the wife of Mr. Burns, the proprietor of the hotel at the corner, known as the "Franklin Exchange;" he considered that this was the best disposition that could be made of the child under the circumstances, and said so, adding that he himself should do all he could to recover the body and trace the connections of the poor woman.

Mrs. Burns carried the little fellow, now quite exhausted with weeping, to her own home, and Mr. Brenthurst busied himself providing for the immediate necessities of those who had taken shelter with him. He was a warm-hearted gen-

erous tempered man, and from his sympathy with suffering, readily learned the best methods of relieving it. He had accustomed himself to the needs of poverty, and studied the ways of benevolence, for he was in all things a follower of the Saviour, whose name he professed before men.

CHAPTER SECOND.

LENNY FINDS FRIENDS.

THE little girl and her aunt, who were fellow-passengers and fellow-lodgers with Lenny and his mother, gave the only clue to the sorrowful story of the poor woman that could be obtained by those who endeavored to discover all they could concerning them.

They were seated in the cars ready to start, when Mrs. Garland and her niece Jenny came in, and took their places near them. The little boy had been so playful and interesting, that a sort of acquaintance sprang up between the children at once; and his mother, who seemed to be a timid shy person, suffering from the effect

of a recent injury received from a fall, as she explained to Mrs. Garland, watched his frolics with a sad smile, and seemed to have had a sorrowful life, from the expression of her face and manner. She had talked to them of Lenny and his childish ways; but never mentioned herself, nor in any way alluded to the object of her journey, nor where she came from.

As the cars drew near the place of their destination, they had noticed that the natural timidity and nervousness of her manner increased greatly, and she seemed feverish with excitement and trouble. She held Lenny tightly by the hand, and bit her lips tremblingly, while she seemed to summon all her fortitude for a great effort.

Evidently she expected to see some one waiting to receive her; for, when she stood on the platform, and found herself entirely alone—every one else having hurried away to their different places—she looked around her with a bewildered gaze, and seemed utterly unable to collect her

energies. Then Mrs. Garland and Jenny drew near, and offered to take her with them for the night to the house where they were to stay themselves. Lenny's mother thankfully caught at the suggestion, saying that it would be easier to find her way in daylight, and that she needed rest very much.

Jenny asked her if she had looked for a friend to meet her, and she answered, confusedly:—

"Yes—no—that is—I don't exactly know."

They had taken tea together, and Mrs. Garland was further impressed with the idea of there being some great trouble weighing on the poor woman's mind, from the fact that she could swallow no food, and had to make a great effort to drink a cup of tea.

Then they went to bed, and were awakened from sleep by the terrible fire that had done such disastrous work in so short a time; and that was all any one knew, or seemed likely to know, of poor Lenny.

Among the ruins, two charred and unrecognisable bodies were found, and then it was discovered that a poor servant woman had perished also; she had slept in the wooden part of the building, and it was most probably in her room the fire originated, as she was in the habit of carrying an unprotected candle in her hand, and setting it on a table near the curtains of the window. The supposition was that she had fallen asleep, and the draught had waved the curtain towards the light till it had caught in the flame. The only way by which the bodies could be distinguished was by a metal band the servant wore on her wrist for rheumatism, the remains of which were found on it still.

Mr. Brenthurst had the mother decently buried, and gathered all the particulars that could be known, until her relatives should appear. Meantime Lenny remained at the hotel.

Mrs. Burns's life was a very busy one, for her duties as landlady of a large hotel occupied her

almost to the exclusion of her own family cares; therefore, though very kindly treated, Lenny was not much the better for her presence, and her bright, merry, rosy little son Tom was too full of fun and mischief to suit the timid, shrinking little orphan, whose terrible experience seemed to hang about him like a dreary cloud, and overshadow him with a sorrow he could not realize, a loss he could not understand.

Mrs. Garland was a poor woman, coming, with her little niece, to take a situation as housekeeper to a wealthy old gentleman residing a short distance from the city. She and Jenny were stopping a few days in town to buy some necessary things, and having conceived a great liking for the poor orphan boy, went every day to the Franklin Exchange to see him, and find out if any reply had been received to the advertisement Mr. Brenthurst caused to be published concerning him.

No answer came, and a week went by. Mrs.

Burns, kind woman, was glad to have the boy under her care, and know that his wants were satisfied; but it was evident that such a business woman could not wish to increase her domestic care by taking charge of a young boy nearly the age of her own, although she shrunk from sending the child to the Foster Home, to take his chances with other little fellows as desolate as himself.

While she was considering this point, with a good deal of disquiet and uneasiness of mind, Mr. Brenthurst came in one afternoon, with a pale, delicate-looking lady leaning on his arm, and begged to see little Lenny.

Mrs. Burns went into the family-room, where her own children were playing, and, brushing the short curls that clustered in thick rings around Lenny's head, wiped his face and changed his apron, having a presentiment that a good deal depended on the impression he was about to make. When she returned, Mr. Brenthurst pre-

sented her to the lady accompanying him as his sister, and said Lenny's appearance did her kind care much credit.

"He is a dear little fellow, is he not?" he asked, anxiously, of his sister, watching her face with no less interest than did Mrs. Burns.

Miss Brenthurst spoke in a very sweet voice, and with much natural kindness of manner; but she was evidently less decided and determined than he, and not quite so easily won by appearances.

"He looks like a dear child," she said, gently. "What is your name, dear?"

"Lenny," responded the child, briefly; but he came near and placed his hand on her dress, examining its rich trimming with an easy confidence that appeared odd in comparison with his usually timid manner.

The lady looked down on his little upturned face, and smiled encouragingly.

"Should you like to live with me, Lenny?" she asked.

Lenny did not quite understand what was meant by "living with" any one.

"Are you coming here?" he asked, looking round the room and trying to see what part of it would be likely to be chosen by his new friend.

"O, no, my little fellow, I mean in my own house, where I live at home."

"Is mamma there?" asked Lenny, with sudden earnestness—"mamma and little Perry?"

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Burns, in an under tone, "that's the first name he has mentioned since he came here. Who is Perry—is that your little brother?"

Lenny laughed outright at this, and repeated, "Little Perry, dear little Perry!" and began looking all around the room, as if he expected to see whoever it might be.

"It is a child he is thinking about," said Mr.

Brenthurst, who was closely observant of his movements. "See, it is low down towards the carpet he looks. Helen," he continued, turning to his sister, "this boy's memory has received a shock, and that is why he recalls everything so imperfectly, and seems to find a blank after each effort. By-and-by, when the effect wears off, he will be calmer, and his mind will strengthen; then he will be able to tell us all about his home and his mother, and, through that means, his family name and friends may be discovered."

His sister shook her head doubtfully.

"Do you think it would be wise to take the child, and become attached to it, just in time to give it up to its rightful claimant?"

"You know we considered all that," answered Mr. Brenthurst, persuasively. "The only point to settle was whether you could learn to like him —whether the charge would not be too great for you."

"Yes—" assented the lady, still hesitating;

"the boy is a nice boy, I know, and I think I could manage him too; but I really feel as if it would be well to make a few more inquiries before engaging to take charge of him, and becoming as interested in his favor as I am sure to, when I once have him under my care."

"That is true," said her brother; "but Mrs. Burns has been untiring in her search, and we have advertised, and done all we could, without making the least discovery beyond what Mrs. Garland had to tell."

While this conversation went on, Lenny, resting his arm on Miss Brenthurst's lap, looked up from one face to the other, as if conscious that some question nearly affecting his own interests was being discussed.

"Now, then," said Mr. Brenthurst, "what is your decision, Helen—shall we take the boy?"

"Yes," said Miss Brenthurst, slowly, and still hesitating; "that is—I think we may try—perhaps it may turn out well—I really trust it may."

Her brother, who evidently had little sympathy with her slowness of conclusion, started up at the first reluctant word of assent, saying:—

"Well, then, that's settled. Mrs. Burns, we take the boy till his rightful guardians present themselves. God grant we may be able to do our duty properly by him, and that he may prove as true a comfort and pleasure to us as he seems to promise now."

He lifted the child in his arms, and gave him a kind, fatherly embrace, and then placed him on his sister's knee, who, after an instant's uncertainty, put her arm round him and kissed him.

"Well, I'm thankful," said Mrs. Burns, "truly thankful to see the child in such good hands. I have no time to do my own children justice, and I have felt afraid of undertaking the care of another, particularly such a thoughtful, strange child as this one. Now I know that there will be nothing wanting. I'm sure the boy will get

on properly with you, and I say, thank God for it!"

Lenny settled the point on his own part by putting up his hands and softly feeling the lace of his new protectoress's bonnet. As she smiled tenderly on him, he raised his face too, and gave her a loving kiss, saying, coaxingly:—

"Bring little Perry to play at your house."

"That is his brother, depend upon it," said Mrs. Burns, in a whisper. "His mother left another child somewhere, and he misses him."

"Poor boy!" said Miss Brenthurst, kindly; "poor little pet! if Perry can be found he shall be brought to play with his little brother."

This promise made Lenny laugh; he clasped both arms round the neck of his new friend, as if she had been an old familiar one, and laughed gayly, crying:—

"Perry's coming! little Perry's coming to play!"

CHAPTER THIRD.

LENNY'S NEW HOME.

MR. BRENTHURST had been an officer in the army for many years, and only retired from the service when the death of his father, and the necessity of settling his rather disarranged business affairs, made his presence at home very important. He was the oldest of his family, and for many years the only son. His brother, who was meant to succeed his father in business, died on reaching manhood, and his two sisters were left entirely unprotected by their father's death.

Helen, the elder, was quiet, grave, and prudent. Leonore, the younger—and a very beautiful, talented girl—was rash and impetuous in

character, and, having never known a mother's care, had become, unfortunately, rather spoilt by her father's indulgence and the unwise admiration of partial friends. She had given the family cause for sorrow in her hasty and disastrous choice of a husband; for she had made a secret marriage with a very handsome and very worthless young man, whom she met accidentally at a watering-place. He was poor and reckless, and repaid the elder Mr. Brenthurst's kindness by forging a draft in his name, and bringing trouble and disgrace on the household.

This unhappy affair occurred just before the death of their father, and was thought by the family to have hastened that sad event. Poor Leonore, conscious too late of her folly, fled with her erring husband when his crime was discovered; they had managed their flight so secretly to avoid being pursued, that no trace of them could be found, although Leonore's brother, full of pity for his unfortunate sister, left no clue un-

sought to gain some knowledge of their place of concealment.

Three or four years previous to the date of the fire, the anxiety and ceaseless endeavors of the brother and sister were set at rest, by the sorrowful tidings of Leonore's death in foreign lands. A gentleman had seen her husband and recognised him, although he made every effort to conceal his name and past history. Finding at last that it was useless to deny his real name, he confessed that he was the George Merton who had married Leonore Brenthurst, and afterwards got into trouble with her father. His wife, he said, was lately dead, and he hoped her family would now cease to persecute them from place to place with their inquiries as they had been doing.

He had promised to see the gentleman again, and give him further particulars concerning the loss of his wife; but once having got away, he kept away, and George Merton had never been

seen again by any of his former acquaintances.

Mr. Brenthurst, finding his father's affairs left in an unsettled state, and seeing that much loss would be occasioned by suddenly closing the business, felt it to be his duty to leave the service and assume the responsibility of the firm. And thus it happened that he was the proprietor of the large warehouse where the poor frightened people from the burnt lodging-house found refuge, for he had hurried from his bed at night on learning the quarter in which the fire was, and hastened down to open his place and heart and purse in their behalf.

His nature was warm, generous, and trusting; he had a horror of deceit, yet never suspected its existence, and was slow to believe in it even when he could find no excuse for doubt. He had given his heart to God on a sick-bed when he thought himself done with the things of this world for ever, but recovering, still retained his reli-

gious fervor, and began a new life dedicated to all good things.

Little Lenny was not old enough to appreciate fully the home into which he had so providentially fallen. He looked with pleased wonder around the beautiful rooms, and examined the toys Miss Brenthurst presented to him, with grave curiosity, for he was entirely unused to playing as other children did.

"Shall you like to live here, Lenny?" asked she, "and will you be our dear little boy, and love us and try to be good?"

There appeared to be a great deal involved in so many propositions, and Lenny paused thoughtfully before replying. At last he seemed to feel some personal slight was conveyed in the last words, for his lips quivered and his eyes filled with tears.

"I am good," he sobbed at last; and added reproachfully, "You said you would bring little Perry."

Miss Brenthurst sighed.

"Yes, it certainly is his little brother," she thought to herself; "and I am sure the family will soon search him out and take him away. I really must try not to love him too much, but simply do my duty by him, for we will surely have to part as soon as they find him out."

But like many other people, Miss Brenthurst came to a conclusion to do one thing and did exactly the opposite.

Lenny had taken an odd fancy for her, and at times caressed her with so much affection and seemed so thoroughly at home in her society, that it seemed rather the renewal of an old feeling than the beginning of a new one.

She found him to be, as her brother had said, quite stunned at first from the effect of that terrible fire, but by-and-by, as he grew familiar with the scenes around him, he showed a bright intelligent nature, and proved artless and affectionate in all his ways.

Of his home in the past he gave strange and sometimes contradictory accounts. At one time he said he lived in a ship; at another he told about a beautiful garden, but he named no other persons than "mamma and little Perry;" and by-and-by, began to forget to say "Miss Brenthurst," and called that lady "mamma" instead.

"I am not your mamma," she said, tenderly; "she is gone away; but when you grow to be a man and learn to be good and love God, He will let you go and see her. You must call me auntie."

"No, no!" he protested; "I call you mamma;" and he seemed so much in earnest about it, that she told her brother she really believed he had found some resemblance in dress or manner that deceived him, and that in some way he associated her with his dead mother.

She was a delicate person, and hitherto having very little to interest or occupy her attention, she had been in the habit of nursing herself, and

fancying that she was much more of an invalid than she now found herself to be. The pleasure of the child's presence, his innocent merriment and playful frolics, so interested her, that every hour had its new and pleasant employment; and after he was tucked away in his little crib comfortably asleep, she would sit up and tell her brother all his pretty sayings and doings, so that the evening, too, had its share of Lenny.

As weeks and months went by without any sign of his relatives appearing to identify and claim him, they began to regard the boy as their own, and lay out plans for his education and moral training.

Mr. Brenthurst's great affection for his sister made him look up to her with deference, and listen to her opinions with respect and attention; but in reality she was merely a timid copy of himself; less ardent and brave in temperament, but like him affectionate, benevolent, and very kind-hearted. She began to gather courage in

her love for Lenny, and the child's warm response to all her affection made her feel that she had a natural right to him, which he acknowledged, though she could not tell on what it was founded.

Everything she taught him seemed to be learned so readily, that she made up her mind he must have heard it all before, and was only recalling it now by an effort of memory.

One day she began to teach him about God, and the dear Saviour, who loves little children. He followed all she said with eager eyes, and agreed to everything she explained with the words, "I know—yes, yes, I know."

"Who told you, Lenny, dear?"

"You told me, that other time—don't you know?" he asked, wistfully looking in her face as if her words suggested a doubt that troubled him.

"I told you?" she repeated; "when did I tell you, Lenny?"

"O, one day—don't you know?" he answered; and looked worried by the effort he made to recall the time, yet could not succeed in it.

"My darling, I never told you, because I did not know whether you were old enough to understand me, or that I should be able to make it plain to you. It must have been your own dear mother who taught you, baby that you are, to turn to the Father of the fatherless, the orphan's Friend. O, Lenny! you must not forget that dear mamma, who tried to lead you to the Saviour's love before she left you alone in this great world."

"I love mamma," responded Lenny; "and I love you, too."

"You must love everybody, because God tells us it is right to do so; every other little boy and girl who loves God can call Him their Father, and so can every grown person, and that makes us all brothers and sisters in His love. Yes, my boy, we are to love each other as if we all belonged to one great family."

"I love mamma, and you, and little Perry," repeated Lenny, gravely; "and I love uncle, and everybody in the world."

"That is well—now you must prove that love by kindness; and I am sure that will be an easy thing, for you are naturally generous and good-tempered."

These qualities, together with a natural observation and aptitude, made learning an easy task to the boy, and his progress so pleased his kind friends, that his life was almost without a shadow on its sunny hours.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

LENNY'S ANTIPATHY.

IN the wisdom and providence of God it has been appointed that no life, however bright, shall pass without its shadows, and that even the young and innocent shall be disciplined by the experience of sorrow and disappointment. Little Lenny had become perfectly happy and contented; the dark cloud of terror that had gathered about him on the night of his mother's death, was gradually dispelled by the warmth of affection and care, and his troubled little mind came back clearly, its young powers refreshed by the nurture of love. It took him a very little while to adapt himself to his happy circumstances, and bask in the cheerful light of

his good fortune. "Auntie and Uncle," as he had learned to call his kind friends, were all the world to him; the recollection of his mother seemed to blend itself in his growing love for Miss Brenthurst, and even "little Perry" appeared forgotten in the enjoyment of playthings and picture-books. The cheerful nursery, which seemed a delightful world to him, was completely filled with evidences of the increasing interest he awakened in good Mr. Brenthurst and his sister. The walks were hung with pictures, whose stories he liked to hear; his rocking-horse with an arched neck and flowing mane stood in one corner, and quite a little museum of carts and carriages, barrows and wagons, soldiers and Noah's Arks, filled the centre of the floor.

It was really pleasant to watch the new and cheerful life so small a member of the household was able to diffuse through its saddened limits; for their father's death, and the subsequent loss of their sister, had clouded the pleasures and

obscured the hopeful interests of the brother and sister for the past few years.

But the shadow that was to check the perfect delight of this existence for little Lenny crept into his sunshine in a strange form, and, quite inexplicably to Miss Brenthurst, proved to be a young gentleman connected with the family, a distant cousin, it was supposed, but a confidential assistant in the warehouse. His name was Clement Blye; and the reason Lenny had not seen him before, was, that he had been absent in the West on a business tour. He did not live with his cousins the Brenthursts, for, although Mr. Brenthurst valued him highly in his place, and often said he could not repay such important services as his with a salary, and so intended giving him a partnership in the concern in good time—yet there was something about him personally that neither brother nor sister could love, and his visits, though frequent, were not social or pleasant. The first day he came to dinner

after Lenny's becoming one of the family, he seemed odder and less at ease with his friends than ever, and yet he made every effort to appear agreeable and well pleased at the addition to the little circle.

"I must see this little fellow, Cousin Helen," he said; "what is it you call him—Lennox?"

"He called himself Lenny, but now that you mention it, I dare say Lennox may have been the name. I wish I knew, for I do not want to change it when he grows up."

Mr. Clement Blye had heavy eyebrows that came rather close together for beauty. He had small black eyes that were very sharp and restless. Sometimes he would gather these heavy brows so thoughtfully that they quite met over his nose, and then the sharp little eyes would be hidden all but a disagreeable twinkle. When Miss Brenthurst looked up pleasantly after speaking, that was all she saw, and the impression was so very painful that she could not dispel

it, although he detected the mistake he had made in allowing her to see his feelings, and fell to smiling blandly, and chatting with great apparent cheerfulness.

"Here is Lenny, fresh from his nap," said Miss Brenthurst, at last. She had been so discomposed by the strange look she had caught, that she had not been able to reply unrestrainedly to his questions about him, until the child's appearing seemed to break the uncomfortable spell.

"Come, Lenny, come speak to Mr. Blye; this gentleman is our cousin, and he wants to see what a dear little boy we have got to love us, and be our little pet."

"O, yes," said Mr. Blye, smiling in a strange uncongenial way; "come and tell me what your name is, and how old you are."

To this, Lenny, who stood still just as soon as he caught sight of the visitor's face, only

responded by a long, astonished stare, but made no effort to move.

"Come, Lenny," said Miss Brenthurst, evidently struck with this proceeding. "Come, dear—why, what is the matter—don't you know it is wrong not to obey auntie when she speaks to you?"

Lenny breathed hard for a moment, then looking from one to the other found his voice, and asked, "Where's mamma? Where's little Perry?"

"Why, what in the world does the child mean?" cried Mr. Blye, in angry confusion; "he is all right in the head, I suppose; but really this don't look like it."

His voice betrayed his disturbance, though he kept on smiling with such an affectation of amiability that there was quite a contrast between it and his face.

"I don't know what the connection in his mind between you and his old home can be," said Miss

Brenthurst, gravely; "but there certainly is something that suggests it as he looks at you. Lenny, did you ever see this gentleman before?" she asked, drawing the child to her side.

Lenny nodded vigorously, still keeping his fascinated eyes fixed on the stranger, and whispered apprehensively, "I don't like him—send him away."

Miss Brenthurst was much annoyed at this unpleasant speech, and, begging her young cousin to excuse her, led the child from the room, explaining as they went the impropriety of being so rude and outspoken.

Lenny was sorry for having offended, but immovable in his opinions. "I don't like him—I won't be naughty any more—please forgive me, but send the man away," were the terms in which he repented of his too great frankness; and Miss Brenthurst, leaving him with the girl who took charge of the nursery, was obliged to defer further reasoning or admonition for the present.

She found Clement in high good-humor, laughing merrily at the unfortunate impression he had made. In trying to be pleasant and agreeable he was apt to overdo the effort, and on this occasion he had fallen into that error too.

He said he must have a very common face, that had been taken for other people thousands of times, so that he began to believe he had no identity of his own. He declared "that it was exceedingly amusing, and that he was quite willing to have a general likeness when it led to such funny scenes. Lenny was a fine little fellow, and scarcely looked as if he belonged to the lower classes; if he had not had an extensive experience of that sort of people in travelling about as he did, he should have called the child aristocratic-looking; but, to a practised eye, there were unmistakable points that betrayed base blood." Then, with another covert glance from under his eyebrows, he discovered that his words were making an uncom-

fortable impression—as he hoped they would—on his cousin's mind; so he laughed, and said it was really very funny and that he enjoyed it greatly.

He no doubt enjoyed the pain he saw his cunning words gave, but he did not seem to have the same pleasure in Lenny's presence. While the child had been in the room he had changed color several times, and been restless and nervous in manner.

Miss Brenthurst was neither suspicious nor penetrating; but she could see that there was some feeling at work under the assumed gayety of her young relation, and the only conclusion she could arrive at concerning its origin was that Cousin Clement was perhaps a little jealous of their regard for a stranger, or it might be that he did not like children, and their presence annoyed him.

With all her other amiable qualities, Miss Brenthurst was remarkable for a self-depreci-

ating humility that seldom saw in others the faults whose effects disturbed.

"I am afraid John and I have not shown him sufficient affection," she said to herself, regretfully. "I wish I had tried to get used to his ways sooner. John is influenced by my foolish repugnance, no doubt. O, dear! I really wish I could like the young man."

So she cogitated as she listened to Clement's conversation about his journey, which would have been very interesting, she thought, if she could have learned to like his way of telling it; but there was something so studied and artificial in every word and gesture of his, that a pure-minded, trusting person like Miss Brenthurst could take but little pleasure in conversing with him.

Lenny did not appear in the parlor again, and after dinner Mr. Blye went away, leaving his Cousin Helen quite worried about the subject of his conversation, which had been the inherited

wickedness of children of the lower classes. He had recounted anecdotes and stories to prove the truth of what he said, and showed plainly through the many instances he cited that it was a dangerous thing to take a child of unknown parentage into your house and heart, for your care and tenderness were sure to act like the heat of the man's bosom in rousing the viper he had sheltered from the cold. He seemed to have a calendar of criminals that had been received in childhood into the homes of benevolent persons, and repaid the charity they owed their lives to by robbing and murdering their benefactors.

He discoursed at great length about the beautiful, trustful goodness of his cousin's nature, and made her feel very much ashamed by praising her for disinterested philanthropy, when she had been giving herself so much pleasure. She had tried to set him right, by saying:—

"No, Clement; you are mistaken—really, it

has been a selfish gratification to me and my brother John to take this innocent, loving child into our quiet home, and he has brightened it and us, I think; but indeed we have thought of our own pleasure too much; if anything unselfish appears in the affair, it is all on Lenny's part."

This avowal seemed to give him less satisfaction than all that had gone before; he appeared to control himself by a strong effort, and tried to laugh, and say they had lived so much alone as to become whimsical.

He had often hinted about the great house they lived in being so empty and silent—and drawn contrasts between it and a lodging among strangers that was all he could claim; but his cousin, though blaming herself for it, had never been able to recover her repugnance to his ways sufficiently to ask him to come and live with them, and so she now accepted this allusion as a deserved reproach, and endeavored by redoubled

kindness to make up for her foolish prejudice, as she thought it.

Mr. Brenthurst talked of the business interests of their house, and praised Clement's energy in all he did. In connection with that department, both brother and sister felt the strongest confidence in him, and scarcely any other conversation ever passed between them about Clement Blye; each knew the other disliked his disposition in private affairs, and so avoided the subject.

"Did Clement see our little boy?" asked Mr. Brenthurst of his sister, after the young man had gone.

"Yes, Lenny was here for a little while. I sent for him before you came in—and do you know, John, I think Clement does not like children at all, and common children particularly."

"Common children!" repeated her brother, in a surprised tone. "What kind of children do you mean by those?"

"It was the expression he used, and he meant

the offspring of the poor—little creatures who never see anything but poverty and privation, who are born into misery, and, according to him, draw in deceit, meanness, envy, and malice with their earliest breath."

"I do not think he could have been talking in a very good spirit to use such terms," said her brother, gravely. "All poor people are not necessarily deceitful and wicked, and although I believe that poverty is often an excuse for such sins, it never should be made a ground of accusation. I have no right to say: 'You are a poor person, and consequently you must be a villanously bad one.'"

"O, no, indeed! that would be very unjust—and I can recall many excellent poor men and women whose histories I know; but while Clement talked he made me feel so uncomfortably that I could not argue the case at all. He tried to convince me that we were doing wrong in receiving an unknown child like Lenny into our affec-

tions, and that the probabilities were all in favor of his growing up to give us trouble, or perhaps bring disgrace upon us."

Mr. Brenthurst ran his fingers through his hair, so that it all stood upright, and looked quite wild. This was a way he had of expressing annoyance or displeasure, and his sister felt sorry that she had repeated what Clement had said, when she saw how it affected him; but she had been so desirous of gaining encouragement and advice, that she could not help confiding her perplexities to him.

"Why should that young man try to make himself and others miserable by indulging such a temper?" cried Mr. Brenthurst, getting up and walking about impatiently. "Helen," he continued, after a little thought, "I am afraid we are to blame for it, in a measure. He certainly is our relative, and he has always shown himself to be devoted to our business interests; in that respect, at least, he deserves credit. His better

feelings have, unfortunately, not been cultivated, and he is inclined to be jealous and suspicious. These points of character have made him disagreeable to us in our home, and we have yielded to our own repugnance to such a nature, and kept him at a distance, instead of bringing him here often, and trying to overcome evil with good. In this respect we have failed in our duty as Christians, and we had better try to repair our mistake."

Miss Brenthurst agreed with her brother, but looked rather despondently about the task of cultivating tender and generous feelings in the bosom of Clement Blye.

"I know it is a duty," she said; "but it seems a very difficult one."

They were sitting in the large old-fashioned back parlor, that was part library and part sitting-room, and, after arriving at this point in their conversation, remained silent, looking at

the cheerful fire that glowed brightly in the wide grate.

A soft footstep, falling almost noiselessly on the rich carpet, interrupted their thoughts, and little Lenny, stealing close to Miss Brenthurst's side, in his white gown, murmured:—

"I came to kiss you good-night—Bessie said I might. Is the bad man gone? O, don't let him come any more, auntie. I don't like him—he made mamma cry."

"Made your mamma cry!" repeated his auntie, looking at Mr. Brenthurst, to bespeak his attention—"made your mamma cry, my dear! Tell me all about it, Lenny."

With great eagerness, the boy began:—

"He came in, and little Perry ran to bite him; then mamma cried, and put her head down this way——" He laid his head on the arm of Miss Brenthurst's chair, and suddenly the delicate thread of memory seemed to break, and he

lost the scene that a moment before had appeared quite fresh in his mind. He looked wistfully from one to the other, and then shook his head, repeating: "I don't like that man—don't let him come here any more."

"Is it not very strange?" asked Miss Brenthurst, in a whisper.

"Yes," returned her brother, appearing to ponder deeply; "but we must not give it too much importance. You remember he has always associated you with his mother, and there can be no doubt that his recollection is very misty and imperfect, owing to the fright of the fire."

His sister assented to this; but still could not get over the singularity of her little charge's very decided repugnance to Clement, since he was the first one he had ever expressed the least objection to since he had been in the family.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

LENNY'S LESSONS.

TO carry out the resolution she had formed the evening of Clement's visit, Miss Brenthurst earnestly endeavored to overcome the shrinking dislike Lenny expressed for him, and at the same time tried to convince herself that there could be no possible foundation for the feeling.

The brother and sister invited him to be a frequent visitor, and meant to make their home pleasant to him; but, although they were both quite in earnest in the effort, they succeeded very poorly. Lenny still shrunk from Clement, and Miss Brenthurst, though she stifled the voice of

her own heart, could not learn to trust or like him.

Clement himself seemed very much pleased by the opportunity afforded him, and never failed to come; but he still kept that hidden manner that made his Cousin Helen uneasy, and, although smiling and attentive to her every word, she would frequently detect him with that cunning, covert look, watching out from under his eyebrows, and regarding Lenny with a glance of but little favor or kindness.

It seemed strange to Mr. and Miss Brenthurst, when they noticed how readily Lenny learned everything, and how quick he was in understanding all he saw, that his memory did not gain the power of going backward beyond the time of his journey to their city. He always seemed glad to see Jenny Garland and her mother, and talked of the day they rode together in the cars; but of the place they had been in before that time it seemed impossible to speak clearly, or connect

any event with any particular place, and give other than confused accounts, like floating fragments of recollection.

After many fruitless efforts, they determined to abandon the subject, and never in anywise allude to the past, hoping that complete rest might help to bring it back more clearly. Neither of them believed in cramming young minds with study — so there was no regular course of teaching laid out for Lenny. He was so fond of books that he learned his letters without being taught, simply by asking their names and connecting them with the pretty pictures that illustrated them. In the same way he taught himself to read little words, and, once having learned, he never forgot anything.

When spring came, and he was, as they supposed, about six years old, he could read the Scripture stories accompaning the brilliant pictures in his toy books, and repeat all the little verses his auntie had read to him. There was a

LENNY AND THE GARDENER.

great garden attached to the Brenthurst mansion, and in it, as soon as the weather permitted, his indulgent uncle set Lenny at work with pretty little gardening tools, and his delighted auntie gave him his first lessons in digging and hoeing.

An old man called Simmons, who lived with his wife in a little house in a back street near by, had charge of the garden, and laid it out in beautiful beds and borders. Lenny soon became very friendly with him, and enjoyed watching him as he sowed seed or dug up beds, and always imitated his way of working, to Miss Brenthurst's great amusement.

In a short time Lenny knew the names of plants almost as well as Simmons did, and delighted to introduce into his own particular little plot all the bright colored flowers, recommended to him on that account by his friend the gardener.

One day he ran breathlessly to Miss Brenthurst, who was sitting with her work on the portico overlooking the garden.

"O, auntie! what is my other name, please?" he cried. "Simmons is going to write it for me in green, and it will be so pretty."

His good friend changed color and turned aside for a moment, for she foresaw in this the beginning of much distress of mind to the poor child. What was his name? Oh! how she wished she could tell him, and how earnestly she desired that the mystery surrounding him could be cleared.

Daily and hourly he was growing dearer to her, and the time might come when parting, if they must part, would be an unendurable trial, and yet she could not help sympathizing with the eager little eyes that looked up inquiringly to hers as he repeated:—

"What is my name beside Lenny, if you please, auntie?"

"Simmons is very kind, dear, but don't you think that 'Lenny' will be as much as he will

be able to find room for in that bed? I think I would not write any other name than 'Lenny.'"

Quite satisfied with the decision, Lenny ran away, repeating—

"Auntie says write Lenny, if you please, Simmons;" adding, on his own responsibility, "I guess my name is Lenny Brenthurst, but that is too long, isn't it?"

The gardener, who had no thought of the perplexity his question had occasioned, looked up smiling.

"It would take a large bed to hold that name," he said; "no, it was the first one I wanted to know. Master Lenny seems like a pet name for a longer one."

"But it is the only one we call him by," said Miss Brenthurst, leaning over the portico; "write it Lenny, please."

"He does not write it, auntie, he only makes little holes, and puts in seed. God writes it by-

and-by when He makes the green leaves spring up, and grow into letters to spell my name."

Miss Brenthurst came down the steps leading into the garden, and drew near where they stood. "You say, Lenny, dear, that God will make the leaves grow," she said; "yet you see it is necessary to do something yourself—you understand now, why, when you say your prayers and ask God to make you good, you must try all you can to do right, so that He will help you when He sees you mean to do your own part."

"Yes, auntie, and I mean to try, because—because you are so good to me."

"It is God who is good, my boy," said the lady, gently; "you must learn to love and trust Him in all things, for there is much in the future that He only can do for you."

The gardener looked up from his work, and took off his hat before addressing his mistress.

"Do you know, Miss Helen," he said, "it is a strange thing to hear the queer names Master

Lenny calls the plants; there are very few that he has not some kind of a name for, and I believe he has lived in a garden somewhere, he seems so fond of flowers and so much at home among them."

"It is a pleasant taste, and a very proper one for him to cultivate just now," she answered. "He learns so readily, that although my brother and I are opposed to children beginning study too young, we cannot very well prevent his learning. He may take as many out-door lessons as he can, without making himself delicate; but a few months shut up in the nursery with his books might steal my dear little Lenny's rosy cheeks."

She patted him tenderly on the head, and taking his hand, said she would walk with him round the beds, and hear all he could tell her of Simmons's plans, which he was very ready to discribe, and very enthusiastic about. He explained in a simple but intelligible manner all the good things God was going to do for them; for Sim-

mons was a very religious old man, who carried his faith into his daily life, and would not dream of assuming any power or responsibility beyond the sowing and planting, and who seemed to renew his trust and love for the Divine Being in watching His tender and beautiful works spring into life and loveliness under his hands.

This was a very young child to teach the principles of religion to, and yet there was a half-defined foreboding in Miss Brenthurst's heart, that he would need the sustaining grace of God's love beyond every other support in his future life. It may be that she was influenced by the knowledge she had of the painful position of a nameless child, and the uncertainty surrounding his future and his past. The present was all she could secure to him; and as they walked together, she began to teach him about the best and dearest Friend we mortals, whatever our station or story, can ever know.

She told him of the goodness and love of God,

and of His tender mercy and compassion; how He answered prayer, and gave His guiding Spirit to all who asked aright.

She had before explained to him the gracious history of the Saviour's life on earth, and His mission to bring sinful men into God's love and communion; with a timid heart and faltering words she had described the death of agony, by which He had sealed His office and reconciled the children to their offended Father, for she doubted her own power of making it plain to the eager thoughtful eyes that followed every word. Then she related how the loving Jesus had taken children such as he into His tender embrace, and uttered the memorable words, "Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not."

This day she told him that he could go into the Saviour's arms by faith, just as Simmons planted the flower seeds and waited for them to come up in tiny green shoots, and by-and-by, when the

summer grew warmer, and the sun brighter, the leaves would be crowned by lovely flowers.

"If my little Lenny is determined to love God and do His will; to pray to Him, for Jesus' sake, to take all the evil passions and wicked thoughts that rise in disobedience to Him, out of his heart, and make him indeed a child of grace, then he is already in the Saviour's arms; the seed is planted and must be watered by prayer and watched, lest naughty thoughts like wicked weeds spring up about it and choke it, as they would Simmons's flowers—if he did not guard them."

"But," said Lenny, thoughtfully, "I don't see the Saviour's arms—where are they?"

"My dear boy, Simmons does not see his seed after it falls in the earth, but he knows that it is taking root, and will grow and become flowers in good time. That is faith, you cannot see or understand it clearly now, but by-and-by it will become plainer to you, and you will learn to know and feel the lessons I now repeat to you.

I hope that their meaning may grow familiar as you grow older."

"I know now," said Lenny eagerly, "I know now! I'm agoing to try to be God's little boy, and say my prayers, and mind you and be good —indeed, indeed I am."

"God bless you, my darling, and hear your prayers! If He will only keep you in his care, I can rest content with whatever chances or changes await us in the future."

"Miss Brenthurst, if you please, ma'am, my poor old woman would be glad to see Master Lenny if you would allow me to take him home for an hour or so. She's laid up with the rheumatics, you know, and has been kept in the house so long that the sight of his young face would do her heart good. And I'll take great care of him," he added, seeing an instant's irresolution on the lady's face.

"Certainly," she replied, smiling; "I don't doubt it in the least. Come with me, Lenny, and

carry Mrs. Simmons a little basket of something for her rheumatism. I'll send him to you directly, Simmons; and tell your wife I will come and see her soon, and learn how the medicine I sent has acted."

The parcel Miss Brenthurst put in the basket for Lenny was so large that Bessie was sent to help him to carry it to the gardener. There was a good roll of red flannel, and some warm woollen stockings, beside a bottle of liniment to bathe with, and a paper of tea and sugar.

Simmons was already putting away his rake and spade in the ornamental tool-house at the end of the garden, when Lenny appeared, his face beaming as if he expected a great treat in the visit.

"Auntie says these things are for Mrs. Simmons, and I may stay an hour if I'm a good boy; and I mean to be a good boy, too." He said this in a breathless way, and put his hand in Simmons's, all ready to start. Bessie cautioned him

to keep his clothes nice, and saw him to the gate, closing it after them as they went. Simmons, who was very fond of children, seemed quite delighted with the pleasure of the little fellow's society, and Lenny himself appeared elated with the prospect of the pleasure before him.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

LENNY'S VISIT.

SIMMONS'S house was so little and snug that this fact alone would have been sufficient delight to Lenny. There was a little door with a little porch over it, and one little window at the side of it. The porch, door, and window were all three festooned with delicate vines that made the homely little place quite lovely in its sweet spring-like green. When the little door was opened it ushered them into a tidy room, small but very cleanly, with its four white-washed walls hung with highly colored prints, and its well-scrubbed floor only partly covered with decent home-made carpet. Its articles of furniture were not many in number,

but they were substantial and well kept; and Lenny could see that there was a back shed or kitchen outside, where the coarser articles of the household work were kept. Although the weather was warm and mild, a bright little fire burnt in the grate, and a kettle was singing cheerily on the hob. Beside it, in a basket-arm-chair, sate a woman, wrinkled and bent—more with disease than age it would seem—and around her shoulders were gathered the folds of a warm knitted shawl, while her feet rested on a cushioned stool close to the fire. At a first glance she was not a pleasant-looking old lady; she was too pale and hollow-jawed for that; but when she spoke, and a beaming smile lighted up her withered face, the first impression was lost entirely, and any one who listened to her patient cheerful voice soon learned to love her.

When she saw Lenny she stretched out her hand kindly.

"So this is Miss Brenthurst's young charge?"

she said, smiling. "Will you come and speak to me, my dear young master? it does my heart good to see a bright little face like yours; for there are four of ours that God has taken home to live with Him in heaven, that were just as bright and dear while we had them with us."

Lenny's mind was fresh from his aunt's lesson, and he was a peculiarly frank and artless child.

"Are they in the Saviour's arms?" he asked, with simple earnestness; "I mean do they see and feel them around them? Auntie says all the children that love Jesus are taken into his arms, but when they go to heaven they see his face and know Him."

"Yes, dear Master Lenny, my little lambs are gathered in the fold of the Good Shepherd. Do you like to look at pictures?"

"O, yes, auntie has a great many pretty ones in my room at home."

"Well, look at this that hangs beside the window—it is called the Good Shepherd, and that

means the Saviour. See the pure white sheep that he is gathering together under his watchful love; they are the souls that have been washed in his precious blood. See the wolves peeping out of that dark wood, and the heavy clouds rising beyond—those are the storms and temptations of this life, and the powerful arm of the Lord is our shelter and refuge from them all."

Lenny's fascinated eyes lingered on the picture with eager curiosity.

"See the crook in his hand,—auntie says all shepherds have crooks, and that is the gospel-crook what the Good Shepherd holds. Look at the tiny little sheep,—those are the lambs, the little children; but I don't see any wicked goats. Are all goats wicked?"

Finding her little guest's interest excited, Mrs. Simmons, in her simple and unlearned way, proceeded to explain her own knowledge of the subject so as to suit his youthful mind.

"I am glad it is not wicked to be a goat," he

said; "for I saw some pretty little kids one day, and they looked very good."

There were other pictures on the wall, and while Simmons set out a little table and spread a clean cloth upon it for tea, his wife directed Lenny's attention to them, and asked him if he could tell her what they meant.

"This one over the mantelpiece is pretty, and I think I know it. That little boy is saying his prayers, and looking up into the bright light. He is little Samuel—

> 'When little Samuel woke,
> And heard his Maker's voice;'

I know that, may I say it to you?"

Greatly pleased to hear his reverent little voice repeating this pretty little poem, Mrs. Simmons, who loved children dearly, begged him to tell her all the verses he knew.

He proved the excellence of his memory by recalling some Scriptural incident in connection

with nearly all the pictures, and related the story of Cain and Abel in his unvarnished, childish way, to the old lady's great delight. Finding in her a very interested listener, he told her he had learned all about Abraham and Isaac, and Noah's Ark, which he would repeat, if she would like to hear it.

She said she dearly loved to listen to God's Holy Word, and that when little children like him showed a knowledge of its great truths, it rejoiced her heart to hear them repeat the lessons they had learned.

So Lenny, finding that she approved of his innocent narrations, and did not laugh when he stammered for a word or found a rather unsuitable one, went on, with great enjoyment of the stories he told; and whenever he could remember any of Dr. Watts's hymns that seemed appropriate, he sang them to the pretty, simple tunes his auntie had taught him.

Simmons, seeing the pleasure his poor wife found in their young visitor, did not interfere with her enjoyment, but prepared and set before them the best entertainment the house afforded.

There was a plate and mug for Lenny that in themselves were a complete treat. They were made of pretty blue china, with gold bands, and the plate had a picture in the centre of "Christ Stilling the Tempest."

A ship had the same charm for Lenny that such things always have for little boys, and he gazed admiringly on the spreading sails and foamy waves.

"That is the Saviour's face," he said, pointing to the one that was meant to represent Him. "I always know the Saviour, He looks so mild and loving. And see, here He is again on this pretty cup, with all the children in his arms. I know a nice hymn about it. I don't know it every word yet, but I am going to learn it so as to say

it to auntie." And he began to say those little verses, commencing—

"I think when I read that sweet story of old."

"Master Lenny," said Simmons, sadly, "you are going to eat and drink from the plate and cup of our youngest boy, who has been at home with his Heavenly Father all of twenty years. He used to be so good and pleasant in his ways that he filled us with great hope and joy. We thought he would live to be a good man, and may be learn to carry the Gospel to heathen lands, for he often said he wanted to be a messenger of Christ's; but the wise and loving God chose to call him away to himself, and we had to let him go, even though it seemed to tear our hearts up by the roots—the love we had was so deeply planted there. Yes, Master Lenny, that's our Willie's mug and plate, and when you look at the pictures with such a knowledge of what they show us, it brings him back to my

good woman and me very plain. God bless us all, and grant that we may meet him by-and-by."

Lenny looked from one to the other, quite awed by the solemnity of the scene.

The twenty years that had passed since the old gardener had laid his last child in the earth seemed but a little while to look back upon, and somehow the trusting little face before them brought back that other face—long, long since turned to dust—that used to sit where Lenny sat now, and fill their hearts with hope and joy.

But it was only a passing shadow. In a moment or two they looked smiling and happy again.

"He is gone, dear wife, from sin and sorrow, and he won the crown without fighting the battle. The least we can do is to strive to meet him in glory, through the Redeemer's mercy."

Then they turned to Lenny, and tried to make him enjoy the nice things set before him.

"These currant buns are of my own making,

Master Lenny," said Mrs. Simmons. "You must not think that I am as useless as I look, sitting here so idle. It is only my knees and ankles that are weak. I can work with my hands and arms, and so my good man has put wheels on my chair, so that I can be moved about easily. Sometimes he rolls me over to the table, and I make our bread and cakes, which he bakes for me in the outside oven; then sometimes he rolls me to the window, and I sew and knit. I can even be rolled on the porch when the weather is warm, and then I enjoy seeing all that goes on outside, which is a great treat to an old body like me."

"I would like to roll your chair," cried Lenny, quite taken with the idea. "I wish I were your little boy, and I would take care of you."

"Bless his kind little heart!" cried Mrs. Simmons, much gratified; "but, dear young master, you have a better lot where you are. You must not forget to be thankful that you are Miss

Brenthurst's little boy, for she is one of the kindest and best ladies in the world."

"My auntie will lend me to you, because your Willie is gone to heaven. I will ask her to let me come here every day, and wheel your chair."

"That would be asking too much, Master Lenny," said Simmons; "but I will tell you something. My wife has a brother who used to be a sailor, and he lives away in the country a dozen miles or more from here. Miss Brenthurst has promised to lend me a little carriage that she seldom uses, to drive out there some bright day. If you were to ask leave to go with us, I think you would enioy it, and we would be very glad to take care of you."

Lenny's eyes sparkled.

"I know sailors; I saw them on a great ship, where I lived with mamma. Does your brother live in a ship?"

"No, it is not a ship, though it looks like one," answered Mrs. Simmons. "He has shells and

corals, and all kinds of fish in a glass case, and a stuffed seal that, when it was alive, he used to pet it as if it were a little dog or pussy cat."

"O, I want to go!" cried Lenny, looking round for the means of starting at once; "can't you take me there now?"

"Not to-day; we must start in the morning, and make a day's journey of it; and first of all, we must get your aunt's consent."

Perhaps it was a fault of Lenny's to be a little impatient, and for a single moment he seemed inclined to lose sight of his present enjoyment, in longing for the promised visit; but Mrs. Simmons recalled his cheerfulness by her kindly advice. "Don't let your good auntie see that you are ungrateful for the pleasures she gives you, Master Lenny," she said; "it was very kind of her to let you come and make us this nice visit. See! here is a cup of milk from our old sukey-cow. Your uncle gave her to us for a Christmas present two years ago, and she is one of the best friends we

have. She gives us all our butter and cream, and seems to know us both when we call her."

"May I see her, please?"

"Yes, surely, when she is milked you can look at her. Did you ever see any one milk a cow?"

"Yes, ma'am, I had a cow in my garden!" cried Lenny quickly; but after pondering a little while he seemed to think himself mistaken, for his face grew perplexed, and his little brow contracted.

"I don't know," he admitted slowly, "I don't know if I had a cow. I thought at first there was one in the garden, but I don't know, now."

Simmons looked gravely at his wife.

"Miss Brenthurst often asks him about the garden he speaks of," he said; "and he always becomes confused and worried after they talk of it a little while. He says he lived there, and on a ship, and seems to get them confused together."

"Perhaps she would rather we did not mention

them at all to him?" returned his wife in a low tone.

"No, I think she is glad to gather anything she can about his past history; indeed she told me so."

Hearing this, Mrs. Simmons turned round with a pleasant smile, and asked Lenny what name he used to call his cow when he went out to see her milked.

"Babette," he replied quickly; and then stopped and looked round him with the strange worried gaze that always accompanied his efforts to recall the past.

"Well, that's a pretty name; did she come to you when she heard you say, Babette! Babette!"

"No, no," said Lenny, looking more and more bewildered, "it was Franz and Babette; there was no cow, it was a pretty goat; two pretty white goats."

"And one was called Franz and the other Babette—which did you like the best?"

Lenny laughed heartily.

"Franz was not a goat," he said, "he had nice music"—he took up a fork and held it like a flageolet at his lips—"this is the way Franz made music;" he showed the motions quite correctly, and then looked eagerly toward Mrs. Simmons as if expecting her to explain them.

"Don't look surprised," she said quietly to her husband; "I believe the reason he has not been able to tell more is that their anxiety confuses him."

"It is our duty to remember all he says, and repeat it to Miss Brenthurst," returned Simmons, in the same low tone; but Lenny seemed to think that he had been thoughtful long enough; he now came back from the past to the present, and declared that there never were such nice cakes as those Mrs. Simmons had made.

"When you come again, I'll make one with your name on it in currants, and a little pie just large enough for your own dinner."

"And may I carry it home and show it to auntie, and give her a little piece, too?"

"Yes, indeed, and you must please to thank her very much for all the good things she sent me to-day, and carry a little basket of eggs freshly laid by our own hens, as a small offering in return."

"Yes, ma'am; may I see your hens, Simmons, if you please?"

"Now that you are done with your cake and milk, I was just going to propose that we should go out and look at Sukey and the chickens," said the gardener; "but first I will get you the pan, good woman, to rinse the tea-things in. See, Master Lenny, how handy my wife is! She can wash up the dishes, and shake the cloth in the grate, without moving out of her chair."

Mrs. Simmons smiled cheerfully, and set to work as her husband said. First she moved the table-cloth aside to make way for the basin of hot water, then she put all the slops in one bowl,

and piled the cups and saucers neatly, shook and folded the cloth, which she put in the table drawer, and with a clean towel began to dry the dishes after rinsing them.

It seemed such an amusing way to work, that Lenny was quite fascinated by it, particularly when Simmons took down a brightly painted hearth-brush, and a little japanned dust-pan from beside the grate, and whisked up the chance crumbs that had fallen.

"O, please let me sweep with that little brush," he cried; "it is so pretty; Babette's was not like that—she took a big bird's wing to sweep with."

"No, not now, Master Lenny; we will only have time to see Sukey and the chickens before I must take you home," said Simmons, standing with a basket of beautiful large eggs in his hand. "You see, Margery," he added, in an undertone to his wife; "Babette was neither a cow nor a goat, and Master Lenny must have lived in some

other country, for it is not an American name. Come now," he continued speaking to Lenny, "come out into the hen-house; I want two more eggs to make the dozen, and you shall find them in the nest, Master Lenny."

It was a very little yard, and if it had not been kept scrupulously clean and in order would not have been very nice; but Simmons had learned to be the best of housekeepers out of love for his poor maimed wife, who could not work about, and who would have fretted to see the place dirty and disorderly.

It was partly paved and partly boarded, and paving and boarding were both as clean as they could be made; a tiny wooden lattice fence separated this part of the yard from the miniature barn and chicken-house beyond. They passed through a little gate which they closed behind them, and then Simmons opened the door of the little building where, by the clucking and fluttering, Lenny knew the chickens were. Sim-

mons then began to call them by name: "Come, Speckle, Lily, Brownie, Scratcher, Bunch, Bustle, Top-Knot, Mottle, Daisy, Netty, Dame Frump, and Jenny Wren."

"O, what funny names!" cried Lenny; "show me which is Jenny Wren; I know a pretty story about her."

"This little gray one with the busy little flutter in her wings—that's Scratcher, she's always digging; and here's Lilly, as white as snow; Speckle is all covered with dots, and Top-Knot has a red hood. See Brownie, and round little Bunch, and busy Bustle. Now you can scatter this meal, Master Lenny, and see them hop about and pick it up."

This was quite a delightful occupation, and Lenny wished that time did not pass so quickly, for Simmons said that they would only have time to get the eggs, and take a look at Sukey before it was time to go back. Lenny found four eggs

with his own little hands in the nest, and in his joyous excitement broke one of them, which Simmons kindly said did not matter, for they could fry it for breakfast.

Then they saw old Sukey feeding. She turned her head towards them, and looked so large and her horns seemed so great, that Lenny edged his way out towards the door a little timidly.

"I don't believe I like such very large cows," he faltered; "she might bite me, and hurt me with her horns."

"O, no indeed, Master Lenny, she is very gentle," said his friend. "When we first got her she used sometimes to kick over the pail of milk just as it was full, and that was very naughty; so we had to punish her to teach her better, just as parents are obliged to do with bad children sometimes."

"Did you put her to bed without her tea?" asked Lenny, deeply interested in Sukey's cor-

rection, the more so as he felt a little shy of her, and could scarcely believe in her reformation.

Simmons laughed.

"No, Master Lenny, that would not be a suitable punishment for Sukey. She has no conscience, you know, and when she does wrong, she is not as guilty as a little boy who is taught how to be good would be. We had to whip her with a stick, and make her afraid to be bad."

A little boy two or three years older than Lenny had been resting his chin on the fence that divided Simmons's yard from the one behind it, and regarding the child's movements with intense interest. He now laughed merrily, and Simmons, looking up, said: "Ah! there you are, Dick White! and how are you to-day, my boy?"

To which the boy replied:—

"Quite well, thank you, Mr. Simmons. I was laughing to think how Sukey served me when she first came here."

"Yes, I must tell Master Lenny about that as we go home together. Come in and stay with my good woman, if you please, while I'm gone, and she will tell you about going to Uncle Nep's."

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

LENNY'S NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

APPARENTLY this invitation was exceedingly well received, for Dick instantly disappeared, after saying,

"Yes, sir, thank you;" and in a moment more he reappeared in the little porch with his cap in his hand, and his bright blue eyes dancing with pleasure.

He was quite a great boy compared to Lenny, and he had a pleasant cheerful frankness about him that made his ruddy face seem really handsome. His head was covered with light crisp curls, and good humor and merriment twinkled in his eyes.

His dress was plain but very neat and tidy, and his manners were respectful and pleasant.

"This is my young friend Dick White, Master Lenny," said the gardener; "his mother is an excellent person, and has been like a sister to my wife in sickness; we are near neighbors, you see, and Dick sometimes stays with my good woman when I am away. But Dick is a busy boy now-a-days, and can't spare me as much time as he used to. He does all the work he can in the daytime, and learns lessons in the evening."

Lenny looked up at this wonderful boy with great respect; but Dick himself did nothing but blush and laugh, until Mrs. Simmons said:—

"I am going to wind yarn for that jacket I am to knit for your mother—will you hold my skeins, Dick?" When he immediately sat down in front of her and stretched out his hands, showing that he was well used to the business.

As they went home together, Simmons told

Lenny that Dick's mother was a widow, and he her only son. His father had been a very good gentleman, but he was so unfortunate in business as to die leaving his wife and child in great poverty.

A kind friend who pitied her desolation gave her the little cottage and piece of ground attached to it, where she had lived for years and worked hard at such employment as lay in her power to perform. She could embroider and do all kinds of elegant sewing, at which she had been so industrious as to injure her health and eyesight. Her noble-hearted boy, with forethought beyond his years, saw that her strength was overtaxed, and manfully determined to do his best to help her. On his own responsibility, he had started out to look for something to do, and finding an old friend of his father's, who was the principal clerk in a large business house, got employment through him as messenger and errand-boy, at a nice little weekly payment. He went quite early

every morning, but got through his duties a little after dinner-time, and his mother helped him with his lessons in the evenings, so that he should not entirely lose sight of his education. It had cost poor Mrs. White quite an effort to give up her son's schooling, even for a time; but she felt that if she could rest for a few months she would be all the better able to attend to her duty in the future, and she thanked God, who had blessed her with such a loving, dutiful child.

The story Simmons told about Sukey and Dick made Lenny laugh. It happened just after they had received the cow from Mr. Brenthurst, and before her mischievous qualities had been subdued.

One day Mrs. Simmons, who was not then confined to her chair through lameness, sent Dick to the hen-house to get some eggs. He remained away so long that she quite forgot about him, until suddenly remembering that she had sent him, and he had not returned, she

opened the door, and went out to look after him.

He was quite hoarse with calling, and still kept on. She looked over the little fence that divided the two yards, and soon saw what was the matter. Sukey had slipped her head out of her rope, had left her place in the barn, and stood with her horns bent down and pointing directly at the door of the hen-house, as if she had been appointed guard over a prisoner there. If poor little Dick attempted to peep out, down would come the threatening horns to meet him, and the angry eye would glance terror into his sinking heart. When he shrank back, completely terrified, she would toss her naughty head triumphantly, as to say, "I have got you, my boy, and I mean to keep you too." So all he could do was to call for assistance, which, the doors being closed, Mrs. Simmons did not hear.

"Did you scold her for being bad?" asked Lenny, much amused at the idea of Dick's im-

prisonment in the hen-house, and feeling rather pleased that Sukey had frightened another boy as well as himself.

"O, yes, we scolded her, and made her understand that it was wrong to play such pranks. Now she is a good cow, and Dick milks her sometimes."

"May I ask auntie to let me milk her too?" exclaimed Lenny, excited at the idea. "I would not be afraid, if you would tie her feet and horns, and hold her tail."

"By-and-by, when you grow older, we will see about it," said Simmons. "Here comes Bessie down the garden-walk. Carry the basket of eggs to her, and tell your kind aunt the names of the chickens that laid them for her, please."

"Yes, I will," cried Lenny, starting to run off with his prize; but, suddenly remembering what a pleasant time he had had, he came back a step or two, and said: "Thank you, Simmons,

for taking me to your house; I want to go again soon."

But Lenny's plans for seeing Dick White again, and making a visit to Uncle Nep's mysteriously delightful home, were all deferred by the unlooked-for events that followed.

His aunt listened with great pleasure to his innocent narration of the pleasures he enjoyed, and rejoiced to hear of the comfort of the gardener's home, to which she had contributed more than her humble goodness allowed her to remember. When Lenny spoke of going again she promised to go with him, and hear more about Dick White and his kind mother. There was nearly a week of dull wet weather during which Lenny could not play out of doors, and it seemed to his despairing little eyes that all the pretty garden would be spoilt; but Miss Brenthurst assured him that when the sun shone again he would discover that everything had been growing

busily under the encouraging rains, and that his own name would be green enough to read.

To get a glimpse of this, he pressed his face close against the glass of the bay-window overlooking the garden; but the rain poured so steadily nearly all the time that all he could see was the drops chasing each other, and falling drip, drip, in the little pools in the garden, and patter, on the roof of the portico.

"I don't like such water-days," he declared, at length. "I am going to say my prayers, and ask God to dry the earth all nice and warm again."

"Come and read me a pretty story," said his auntie, cheerily; "come tell me some of those nice hymns you have learned. Don't you know that some poor little boys have to wander out in just such rainy days, and get all wet and miserable? My little Lenny should be thankful that he has a nice room to stay in, and should not

fret because he has to wait a day or two before he sees his garden."

"O, auntie," returned the child, not properly impressed by this lesson, "I wish I were a poor little boy, I would not mind the water, I would laugh and jump in the puddles, and shake off the drops."

Bessie tapped at the door before Miss Brenthurst could reply.

"If you would please to step down into the hall, miss," she said; "there's a poor woman with a little girl and a baby. They are beggars, and they seems poorly. Cook says may they go into the kitchen?"

"Yes, certainly, take them in where there is a fire at once. A little girl and a baby did you say, Bessie? Come, Lenny, come down and see them. You were saying you would like to be out in the storm, and you shall judge whether it is as pleasant as it seems."

"But I would not want to go without my supper, though, auntie," he interposed; "I said I would like to paddle like that little boy that walked in the gutter with his pantaloons rolled up, just for fun, you know."

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

LENNY'S "LITTLE JOHNNY."

THE woman and her two children were already in the kitchen when they went down. Cook had given her a seat beside the range, and hung her dripping shawl and hood where they might dry. She had also spread out a tattered cloak of the child's before the fire, and had taken the baby in her own arms.

"O, just look at the pretty dear," she said, tenderly; "it is sickness that's ailing it, for you can hear how it moans as it breathes, miss."

"We have all been sick," said the woman; "that is what has brought us so low. I was

down myself for three weeks, and then Sally was took bad, and now Baby's going."

"Have you a husband?" asked Miss Brenthurst, kindly.

"Yes, ma'am, but he left here to get work on the railroad six months ago. He gave me money enough to get along with if I had been able to work a little myself; but I was laid up and had to buy medicine, and it all went. Now I am too weak to work, and my spirit seems broken. Indeed, ma'am, I feel as if I would rather lie down and die, than strive any longer against poverty and misery."

Miss Brenthurst looked shocked to hear her speak so despairingly.

"You must have been very ill and wretched, my poor friend," she said, soothingly; "but still it is not right to talk so. It has pleased God to afflict you, but trust in his mercy and he will raise you up friends. To begin with, cook, you had better get them something warm and com-

fortable to eat, and I will see if I can find some dry clothing for the present."

Leaving Lenny beside the baby, that Bessie had taken while cook rose to prepare some food, Miss Brenthurst went up to her store closet, where she was in the habit of putting away all sorts of garments for the poor. She was an active Christian in her quiet way, and employed needy seamstresses to sew substantial clothes in the summer season, to be given to the destitute in the hard cold winter. From among them she selected the best suited to the three poor souls below, and carried them down. Already the benevolent cook had prepared a wholesome meal, and the woman and her little girl were just sitting down to partake of it. "That's right," said Miss Brenthurst cheerfully; "you will feel better able to tell me all about yourself, after you have eaten something and put on these dry things. Bessie, you can bring them up into the nursery then, and we will see how they can be set right."

The woman rose, and murmured her thanks in broken words; apparently she had not been used to so much kindness, for she was completely overcome by it, and burst into tears, unable to express herself clearly.

Miss Brenthurst made light of what she had done, and called Lenny to come up with her.

"May I bring the baby, too?" asked he, still holding its thin little hand in his.

"Not yet, dear; its mother will bring it presently," said his aunt.

"Then please let me stay till she comes," pleaded Lenny; and Bessie said she would see that he did no harm, and take him up with her. So Miss Brenthurst allowed him to remain, because he seemed so very fond of the sick child. In a little while he came up the stairs heading the small procession, and calling his aunt's attention to the improved appearance of the party, by shouting:—

"O, see the baby now! Bessie put the little

gown on it, and a flannel petticoat—isn't it pretty? isn't it pretty?"

Indeed they all three looked very much better in every way. The woman had on a good chintz wrapper and a gingham apron, the little girl wore a comfortable calico dress; and all three were clean, and well combed and brushed.

Miss Brenthurst smiled approvingly.

"Now tell me where your husband was when you last wrote to him, and let me see how I can serve you, in bringing you together again."

The woman blushed.

"O, ma'am, we neither of us can read or write," she confessed; "and that has caused us sore trouble, for he got a man to write to me, that put the wrong name on the letter by mistake, and that was what kept me so long waiting. The woman that rented us a room wrote an answer for me—when I got it at last—and said that I was sick, but would be able to go to him as soon as he sent me the money. It came with a line

saying, that he would wait for me on a day he named, and giving me directions how to come; but little Hattie had been sick, and I had been worse, and we owed most of the money, which the people would not wait for; so I could not go, and I have never heard a word since."

"You have got the direction, have you not?"

"Yes, ma'am, here it is;" and she took a brown and soiled bit of paper out of her breast, and laid it before Miss Brenthurst.

"Why, this is a considerable distance from here, my good friend," said the lady; "it is a day's journey in the cars."

"Yes, ma'am, he told me so; but he said he had work there for a whole year to come, and that he would be paid for it all at the end of six months more. He borrowed the money he sent me, you see; and that's what worried me, to think after the struggle he made that it should all go, and we not get to him."

Miss Brenthurst remained thoughtful a mo-

ment, and then said, "Should you feel justified in risking the journey to him now, if I wrote to him to meet you at the cars?"

The woman clasped her hands in thankfulness.

"O, if you would only do that! He would be glad to pay the car-man, for he could borrow the money again, I suppose, if he has not got it yet."

"I will buy you the tickets and see you safely started—and now I will attend to it at once. There is a room next Bessie's, on the upper floor, where you and your children can stay until I have made the necessary inquiries."

While Miss Brenthurst spoke, the poor woman's face testified its joy; and when the kind lady added, that she could not proceed in the matter, beyond writing to her husband, until she had made herself assured of the correctness of the whole story, by asking the woman with whom she had lodged, she showed such eagerness to have it investigated, that Miss Brenthurst had no doubt of the truth of her narrative.

The letter was written and directed to John Murray, in care of Mr. Price, his employer; and Bessie went down to the lodging-house, to see the woman, whom Miss Brenthurst felt rather averse to meeting, when she remembered that she had turned out a sick woman with two children, after securing all the little money they had. Bessie came back in an hour and reported, that Mrs. Blaney, as the woman was named, kept a general shop, and let lodgings in the same house; that she seemed a hard sort of woman, but had nothing ill to say of poor Mrs. Murray—"she was quiet and decent enough, and would have paid if she could, no doubt, but if she has to let all the poor decent people keep her rooms without paying for them, she would soon be without a house over her own head."

Lenny had followed the baby up stairs, and clung to it with this newly awakened affection even when it lay asleep.

"Don't let it go away; let us keep it, please,

dear auntie," he said earnestly; "I will play with it, and keep it quiet, and it shall sleep in my pretty bed."

His aunt explained to him how eager its poor papa must be to see it, and how wrong it would be to keep it from him. Very reluctantly he confessed the propriety of this arrangement, and seemed to feel that he was making a greater sacrifice than was actually necessary in giving up his little favorite.

Miss Brenthurst allowed him to stay with it a good deal, and heard from Bessie that he seemed perfectly happy when he could hold its little feverish hand in his.

"I am afraid, miss, that Mrs. Murray don't know how sick the baby is," said the cook, the day that the little family were to start on their journey. "It seems to me that it is very ill, and I think she ought to have a doctor about it."

"Then I will send Simmons for one immedi-

ately," said her mistress; "perhaps I had better do so without speaking to her; she may think it would trouble us, and so refuse."

Accordingly the family physician was called, and Miss Brenthurst, explaining the poor woman's story, led him into the room where she sate, busily arranging some necessary articles her kind friend had provided for her outfit.

She was startled when she saw the strange gentleman; but Miss Brenthurst kindly assured her, saying that it was best to know whether the little one needed any medicine on the way.

The good doctor looked quite gravely at the poor baby, and asked if there had been nothing done for it.

"I did give him a little of the bottle Hattie had when she was sick, but he seemed worse after it, and then I did not know what to do," murmured the poor mother; "he seemed so quiet when we got into this comfortable place, and

wanted to sleep so much, that I thought he would come round nicely without physic."

The doctor said very little, and wrote a prescription, with directions for the child to be kept warm, and not exposed to the air.

She was so set on going that he did not offer any objection, and when he saw how comfortably Johnny was to be wrapped up and carried, seemed to think it would do no harm.

While they stood there, Lenny stole in, and took his place by little Johnny; but the doctor instantly interposed:—

"Keep your little fellow out of the room, my dear Miss Brenthurst; there is no necessity for running into danger, you know, and he may catch the fever."

Miss Brenthurst changed color.

"What fever, doctor?" she said, nastily.

"It looks like the scarlet fever—though as there is no rash yet, I can't say positively,"

said the physician; "and you know you don't want to risk it for the boy."

"Certainly not," cried she; "Bessie, take him away;" and it being a clear day at last, Lenny was sent into the garden to see Simmons for the first time since his visit to the little cottage.

CHAPTER NINTH.

LENNY'S FEVER.

SIMMONS was busy at the bed where the seed was sown that was to spring up into the word Lenny; little shoots of green had already begun to break the sod, but nothing like the pretty sight he had expected, so the boy felt disappointed.

"Where are all the letters, Simmons?" he said, dejectedly; "I though they would be quite plain; this isn't a nice garden, it don't grow right."

The gardener rested on his hoe-handle, and looked at the clouded little face with great interest.

"When you planted them you told your aunt that you knew what faith meant: while you wait for them to grow you must learn what patience means, Master Lenny."

"I don't want to learn patience, Simmons, because patience is not nice. I want the flowers to grow right away, and I want to keep little Johnny always. I will give Mrs. Murray the great big soldier uncle bought me, and the pretty wagon and rocking-horse I got last week, if she will give me her little Johnny. Don't you think she ought to do it?"

Simmons tried to look serious.

"I think she loves her baby more than toys," he said; "and it would make her very sorry to go away without it."

"It makes me sorry to be sent out here without the baby; but the cross doctor said I must go, and I am very angry about these slow flowers that don't hurry and grow nicely."

Then Lenny began to tell the story of Mrs.

Murray and her children in his childlike way, and ended as he had begun by deploring the necessity that he could not understand. "If she would only leave the baby she could go right away, but I do want her to leave Johnny."

There was a good deal of work to be done in the garden that day: plenty of little pots were to be carried from the conservatory, and the flowers they held transplanted. This was something Lenny enjoyed; and to get his mind off the grievance of losing the baby, Simmons invented many pleasant little duties for him, that kept him employed till Bessie came to take him in to tea.

The baby was gone, and Clement Blye, who was conversing with his aunt, seemed to stop his inquiry midway in his throat, for he had run towards her with his lips apart, but stood quite still at sight of him, and uttered not a sound.

So decided was this dislike on Lenny's part that he could scarcely be persuaded to sit down to tea, and even when he had so far overcome

his repugnance as to take a seat on the other side of the table, he continued to edge his plate and mug further away from the gentleman, and nearer to his aunt.

Miss Brenthurst took no notice of this behavior—she had made up her mind that she was already unjustly prejudiced against the young man, and she would not allow herself to be further influenced by a child's whim. Clement was to go away on one of his business journeys to the West on the next day, and would not return for a month or two.

"You must come and see us more frequently when you return, Clement," she said. "I feel that we should try and make our home more agreeable to you, for I am afraid we are a little selfish in our quiet lives—your Cousin John and I. Dear little Lenny here is doing us both good — he is bringing us into sympathy with youth and youthful feelings. You must do your

share, too, by letting us have more of your society."

She smiled kindly, and tried to express the warmth she desired to feel to this unprepossessing relative, who in return appeared to be all gratitude. It would give him more pleasure than he could tell to see his dear cousins frequently, and indeed he had long wished to convince them of his affectionate interest, though he had received so little encouragement as to fear that he might be misunderstood. He should not have that dread in the future, he continued—he should be all confidence now, and trusted to be with them on his return, which he would hasten on that account.

"Yes, Clement," said Mr. Brenthurst, who had not spoken before, except to Lenny, "come and see us frequently—look on our place as your home, and make it so."

Clement appeared overcome with gratitude.

"I don't think I could convince you of what

a cheerless thing a *homeless* life is. You could not realize what you have never known; but when I turn my face towards the city of my birth, there is no one to watch for or welcome me when I reach it; there is no vacant chair to be prayed over, no familiar form to be missed—I come and go without love or kindness; so you will excuse my being overcome with your goodness."

He turned away, and seemed to yield to emotion; and yet Miss Brenthurst was sorry and ashamed to note, despite all her efforts to believe him and be interested in his protestations, that the same covert look stole out and rested on Lenny—the same stealthy glance, that boded no good to any one, and betrayed a malicious nature.

But this evening he no longer talked of low-born children bringing trouble and sorrow on those who befriended them: he praised little Lenny as much as he had before detracted

from him, in his sly way, and yet it was for no quality that the boy possessed, apparently, but for dispositions that he chose to bestow on him.

"Cousin Helen," he said, thoughtfully, "do you observe what a deep eye your little charge has? He must be a calculating little fellow, very cunning and bright—disposed to be secretive too, I should say."

Lenny seemed to wince under this mention of him, and the attention directed with it.

"I have never discovered such characteristics," said Mr. Brenthurst, decidedly.

"No, no, I should suppose not; if he is the lad I take him for, he will not let his real nature be seen. I think he has an outside case, but under it you will find the true temper that governs him. A bright boy, handsome and well-grown. O! I should say that it would be impossible to understand him thoroughly without deep study."

And so he went on; whatever else the subject might be, Lenny and his *depth of character* were

sure to be drawn in; it did not matter how the brother and sister—who looked on the theme as too prejudiced to be argued fairly—strove to turn the current of the conversation.

Lenny himself slipped away just as soon as he dared, from the table, and asked Bessie to let him go to bed, where he fell asleep, crying for poor little Johnny.

The next day was stormy again, and so for many days damp air and cloudy skies made garden work impracticable. Lenny sat beside his auntie, and read his lessons, or played with his nine-pins and rocking-horse; but he seemed weary and dispirited, and often dropped asleep over his work or play.

Seeing that he appeared depressed and troubled, the thoughtful Miss Brenthurst supposed that perhaps he might have discovered in Mrs. Murray's baby some likeness to the child he called little Perry, and felt deeply sympathetic for the loss that renewed itself in his heart at the sight of

another little child, and, taking him in her arms, tried to console him. To her own mind, there could be no sorrow or trouble that a Saviour's love could not reach and steal the sting from, and she knew no better balm for the wounds of young or old. She whispered to him that the dear Lord, who had cared for him and sent him among friends who loved and cherished him, would some day bring him and his little brother together. She told him that he must learn to trust and pray to God, through the name of Jesus, and then cloudy or sunshiny weather would seem alike good, as part of the work of the Great Ruler, who orders all things aright.

Lenny's head lay on her shoulder, and he seemed to listen and assent to all she said, except about his little brother.

"He was not my brother," he murmured, "he was Mrs. Murray's baby; but I loved him."

Seeing that he did not understand her allusion to "little Perry," his aunt did not refer again to

the subject, but went on to say that she trusted her dear Lenny loved and honored the Saviour, and remembered that He was always ready to take him in His gracious arms and bless him.

Lenny's head dropped lower, and his voice sounded faint and weak.

"I think, auntie, I will go home to where Jesus lives! I feel strangely—my eyes are all full of bright lights, and I can't stand on my feet — it seems as if I were going to fly far away, through a place full of stars!"

Miss Brenthurst started up and caught the boy as he was falling to the ground.

His eyes were wide open, but quite fixed; his mouth quivered convulsively, and his limbs twitched.

She had some experience among sick children in the homes of poverty, and she knew in a moment that this was a spasm. Naturally timid, and easily alarmed, her great love for the child strengthened her, and filled her with desperate

courage to do all she could to save him. When Bessie appeared in answer to her call, she sent for the doctor; but not waiting for him to come, did for him all that she had learned to be useful in such cases.

The fit yielded to her remedies, and he was lying still in his own bed when the physician came in.

"Yes, just as I feared," said he, after a silent examination. "You should have been wiser, Miss Brenthurst, than to have allowed him to cling to that sick child; he has caught the fever, and now we must do what we can for him, and lose no time."

As she argued from this and her own observation that poor Lenny was very ill, Miss Brenthurst devoted herself to nursing him with all her powers. She would not give way to self-reproach, lest it should lessen her abilities to act. Instead of regretting, she prayed ceaselessly, and implored God's aid and direction in what

she did, striving hard to rely implicitly on Him, and say, "Not my will, but thine be done."

Every one in the household discovered how dear the little boy had become to them, now they saw that he was likely to be lost to their love and tenderness in this world.

Mr. Brenthurst lingered beside the little bed, and even came up during business hours to see how he fared.

Simmons brought anxious messages from home, and little Dick White asked Bessie whenever he caught sight of her, "How the nice little gentleman was now?"

But for many days Lenny neither knew nor appreciated what was being done to baffle disease and rescue his young life from the jaws of death. He tossed his restless head from side to side, and moaned constantly, as if his scattered senses were still conscious of great pain. Sometimes he shivered, although his head burned in fever, and sometimes he panted for breath, as if over-

come with heat. At last the rash, that for a long time withstood their efforts, was brought out on the surface of his body, and then they began to hope again; although Lenny gave them but little encouragement, for his mind wandered worse than ever, and he talked unceasingly of things entirely apart from his life at the Brenthursts.

He spoke of his mother now, and seemed to see her constantly beside him.

"Don't cry, mamma!" he would exclaim, with tender sympathy in his tone—"dear mamma, don't cry! Naughty papa is all gone, and Lenny will bolt the gate to keep him out."

"You remember, dear John," said Miss Brenthurst to her brother—"you remember that we remarked to each other the singularity of his having no recollection of his father; now it comes back to his poor little wandering mind, and you see he must have been a bad, harsh man."

THE SICK ROOM.

"I am afraid so," said her brother, with interest; and they stood silently watching the eager face and gleaming eyes of the sick boy, that did not show the least glance of recognition for them.

"You said you would take me home, mamma," he continued, and his voice became pleading, as he went on to entreat: "O, do take me home, and then you won't have to cry so much—you won't be afraid of papa, for they won't let him hurt you at home. Hush!" he cried, starting up in bed, "there he comes; let us run and hide—he kicks the doors and breaks the chairs, and is so angry always."

"What a dreadful life for my poor dear innocent boy!" murmured Miss Brenthurst. "I am really glad now that his memory seemed to refuse to go back to that time."

"Yes, I trust, if God spares him to recover, he will lose all recollection of that wicked father's

harshness with the disordered state of mind that has brought it back to him."

Both brother and sister were deeply attached to the boy; the peril in which he had been convinced them of the strong hold he had upon their feelings. Devoutly they prayed that his life might be spared, and that they might have the wisdom given them to make it a useful and good one, by guiding his young steps in the ways of righteousness and peace.

At length a day came when it seemed that God, in His infinite love, had hearkened to their entreaty. Lenny looked up into their joyous faces with quiet glances of recognition, and, in a very weak tone, called them all by name. The danger was passed, the doctor said, and all he needed now was careful nursing and nourishing food—and every heart in the household rejoiced at the happy tidings.

It was weeks since he had known any of them, or seemed to be conscious of aught connected

with the present, except its suffering; but wherever his mind had wandered, it came back, with a beautiful realization of God's mercy and a thankful sense of his own indebtedness to the love around him, that was delightful to contemplate.

Affliction has its uses to every mind, and unless its message is received into the chastened heart, a great opportunity will be lost.

Lenny was a very young scholar at this great school, but he had learned its lesson with wisdom beyond his years.

His first words were grateful expressions of love:—

"Dear auntie, how kind you are to such a troublesome boy as I am! O, what would become of me, if Jesus had not taken me in His loving arms and held me while I was so sick!"

"And how much you must love Him for sparing you, dear Lenny! We have all been praying that He might restore you, and you must help us to thank Him for hearing our prayers, my love."

"Yes, dear auntie, I do thank Him in my thoughts, even when I don't say it in words. I thank Him all the time. See! dear Bessie is crying—she is so kind that she cries glad tears for me—and cook, and Mary, and Simmons, and all. I'll have to be very good when I get strong, and I am going to try."

Miss Brenthurst turned away her head, and could not speak; it made her heart fill full of love and joy to see the little orphan's thankful piety.

When Mr. Brenthurst came and stood beside the little bed, Lenny laughed pleasantly.

"O! uncle, I am going to grow up and be a good man, like you," he said. "God heard auntie pray for me, and He let me live, and when I am old enough I will find some lonely little boy and take care of him, because you are so good to me."

"My dear boy, if you knew how much we loved you, you would understand how a small act

sometimes brings a great reward; and I trust that through the grace of God you may live to do many noble deeds, and use the life He has spared so mercifully, for His glory and honor."

CHAPTER TENTH.

LENNY'S RECOVERY.

IT took a very long time for Lenny to become strong and robust again. He was soon able to sit up; but a harassing cough remained, and close attention and nursing were necessary to prevent it spreading into inflammation. The warm summer had come, and yet the garden's bloom was lost to him, except in the pretty bouquets that Simmons sent in every day to adorn his table with.

"I do want to see the flowers grow so much, auntie! Will I not soon be well enough to run out in the air?" he said, anxiously.

"Have patience a little longer, Lenny, and

then you shall go into the country and play in the orchards and fish in the brooks. Won't that be delightful?"

"Yes, ma'am," responded the boy; but he hesitated and looked uncomfortable, changing color and fidgeting in his cushioned chair.

Miss Brenthurst looked up in surprise, and followed the direction of his eyes, till they rested on Clement Blye in the doorway, and she discovered the cause of his uneasiness.

This young gentleman had returned in the first week of Lenny's recovery, and had done justice to his cousins' invitation by constantly visiting them, and particularly trying to win Lenny's good will.

He brought him trifling gifts from time to time, and insisted on sitting down and talking to him, in spite of Lenny's undisguised repugnance.

Miss Brenthurst had tried to reason this odd dislike out of her little boy's mind; but it seemed to be a fixed sentiment, which he could not ex-

plain to himself, but which was stronger than his own will or reason.

"My dear Lenny," she had said, "it is not a good proof of our love for the Saviour, when we cherish an unreasonable dislike to any of His children. You know we are all members of the one great family, and God is our Father — we must show our tenderness for Him first in our love of those He has made our brothers and sisters."

"I will try to be good," was Lenny's invariable reply; "but please don't let him come up here. I don't hate him — I would not be so wicked—but I want to get away from him very much: he makes me so frightened — don't let him come, please."

Left to study her own pleasure alone, she would have yielded to this entreaty, but the conscientious lady accused her prejudices of aiding to bring about this unpleasant state of feeling, and she felt it her duty to get over the objections

of Lenny and hers in the same way by accustoming both to the society of Clement Blye, and making every effort to develop all the good she could discover in him.

And so it happened that she turned to him with a kindly smile, and gave him a seat at a little distance from the shrinking Lenny. He began to talk about the fine weather, and begged to know when she would let him drive their little sick boy out for the air. Before she could reply, Lenny caught at her dress and whispered, "No, no, O please say no!" so she turned the subject, saying that the doctor had not given them permission yet; they must have patience for a little time longer, and then she asked what he thought of their garden, proposing that he should take a turn through it, and give Simmons a little encouragement.

"For he really has not had the reward of his labors so far; he had looked forward to Lenny's

pleasure so unselfishly that it is a pity to disappoint him."

"It looks very luxuriant from the portico," said Mr. Blye. "Shall I gather you a nosegay of your favorite flowers, Cousin Helen?"

He pointed to the vase standing near her filled with June roses, and some pretty white blossoms that contrasted well with their rich coloring. She smiled, and said they were Lenny's favorites, and Simmons having discovered how much he liked them, had a fresh bunch every morning waiting for him when he awoke.

Clement Blye might make the effort, but he could not conceal how entirely uncomfortable he felt at every word of praise or love bestowed on the little orphan—the sharp, malignant glance, that flew like an arrow from under his heavy brows, betrayed his evil thoughts, and gave a warning to others to beware of trusting such a nature. But Miss Brenthurst had determined to stifle all suspicion, and although she could not be

unconscious of her young relative's stealthy manner, she would not allow her thoughts to accuse him.

When he was gone into the garden, she began to tell Lenny of a sad circumstance that she had known for some time, but which, owing to the weak state of the boy's health, she had hitherto thought it best to conceal from him.

"Do you remember Mrs. Murray, Lenny? Ah! yes, of course you do, and dear little Johnny, too. Well, Lenny, she sent me a long grateful letter written by the daughter of her husband's employer, that has given us at once pain and pleasure. It makes your uncle and me glad to find people who are so anxious to do right, that they are over-thankful for any little aid they receive; and Mrs. Murray and her husband are of this sort. Lenny, you know how sick that dear baby was; well, my love, it is quite well now, and will never know what illness or pain or sorrow means; it is one of the blessed

babies the Saviour has taken home into his arms. Little Johnny is in heaven."

Lenny drew a long gasping breath, and the tears gathered in his eyes, but did not fall.

"Johnny is in heaven," he repeated; "dear little Johnny is a little angel now; but Johnny's poor mamma is very, very sad;" and as the picture of the sorrowful mother seemed to rise before him, the tears burst forth and fell in showers.

"Yes, she is very sorry; her heart is grieved and lonely; but she trusts in God, who can heal all her afflictions, and wipe away her tears. Little Johnny is blest, and she can only cry over her own loneliness—not for him."

"Yes, and I am so sorry for her—so sorry for her," he repeated, and seemed lost in thought.

Miss Brenthurst went on to say, that Mrs. Murray's husband had met her, and taken her to lodgings; but through the kindness of his employer he was to have a little place of his own soon, and Hattie was to be sent to school as soon

as she grew strong enough. They had sent back the money that was advanced to them, with their grateful thanks, and Mrs. Murray had said the remembrance of the goodness they had shown her would never forsake her while she lived. She was thankful in the midst of her affliction for God's mercy to them all, and could kiss the rod that smote her, trusting still in the goodness of the Lord.

Lenny listened to her words, and his thoughtful eyes were downcast; at last he looked up, and with a heightening color, said, quickly:—

"Auntie, why did God take Johnny and leave me?"

"My dear boy, we cannot fathom Divine Wisdom; we can only hope that we may prove worthy of the love and mercy we receive." She stooped down and put her arm about the slender little figure he had become through illness, whispering softly:—

"O, may his gracious wisdom influence you,

my love, to become his true and devoted servant; to hold the life he has given you wholly devoted to his service in the good of your fellow-creatures!"

Lenny put his little thin arms round her neck and kissed her, saying:—

"I want to be good, dear auntie, and I am going to try hard. I do not care now if Mr. Clement comes into this room, for I'll think of God and not look at him."

This was the nearest approach to amicable feeling she could hope for between them; so, fain to be contented, Miss Brenthurst turned to admire the flowers her cousin just then brought in from the garden. They were of many kinds and very beautiful, but there was not one rose among them all.

The next morning, Miss Brenthurst took an early opportunity of walking in the garden. She wanted to consult Simmons about some plants, and ask after his wife, whom she was kindly in-

terested in. She found him standing disconsolately beside a small bed in the centre of the garden.

"I'm sorely put out, miss," he said, raising his hat as she approached. "You know Master Lenny had his name written here in the spring, and it had come up so beautiful that I took a great pride in it. Only yesterday I looked at it, thinking how proud he would be when the doctor gave him leave to come out, and I showed it to him. But, miss, would you believe it, Mr. Blye was looking about for flowers yesterday, and he got in here, where there was really none of the sort he wanted—and I told him so, warning him at the same time that the bed belonged to Master Lenny—and he ground his boot-heels into the roots, tearing it up on all sides, and spoiling the whole name. Just look at it, miss!"

Indeed it was a scene of devastation on a small scale, and it must have cost the young gentleman

some trouble to perform the mischief he had done. Miss Brenthurst was deeply troubled, and for a moment or two did not trust herself to speak. Then she said:—

"It was getting late when Mr. Blye was out here—he could not see very well, I suppose—it is a pity, a great pity."

She took a turn round the walks, and, coming back again, with her usual cheerful kindly manner gave her directions, sent her messages, reported about Lenny's state, and, going into the house, paused a moment to say:—

"There is a good, frank-faced boy, who says his name is Dick White, and that you are a neighbor of his mother's; he stopped Bessie often to ask about Lenny during his worst illness, and to-day he gave her a beautiful red apple to take to him, as he passed the hall-door. He must be a kindly lad, and if you have no objection to take a message to his mother, I would like to have him come and see our little boy, if she does

not fear to trust him near Lenny after his fever."

Simmons was highly pleased to find that his little friend was likely to gain his mistress's favor. In a few words he related what he knew of Mrs. White, and commended the energy and industry of her dutiful son.

"I am very glad to have such a pleasant recommendation with the boy. I was at first disposed to like him, and what you tell me makes me respect him sincerely."

Saying this, Miss Brenthurst left Simmons greatly delighted, for he was a warm-hearted old man, and, in his humble way, did all the good he could, rejoicing with single-mindedness over every good word or kind act bestowed on others.

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

LENNY'S VISITORS.

LENNY grew stronger by degrees. To be sure it was slow work; but he learned to be patient, and, as he was already grateful and loving, he proved himself a very noble boy, and hourly became dearer to his adopted relatives, who watched over him with growing affection. During the days of his confinement to the nursery, he received two visits, full of pleasure to himself and his genial auntie.

The first of these came on a lovely, balmy day, when he was able to sit by the window and look out on Simmons in the garden below. He was so busy watching the old man's movements,

and making motions to him to lift up pots from the conservatory for him to see, that he did not hear a cheerful, pleasant voice at his side, repeating "Lenny, Lenny, dear," till he suddenly glanced round and saw Jenny Garland standing smiling at his side. She was a bright, good-humored amiable girl, with a kind word for everybody, and a ready, obliging manner that was sure to make friends. She had grown a good deal taller, and was quite improved, since he saw her last, for her aunt had got an excellent situation where she was treated with great kindness, and Jenny was sent to school and being prepared for teaching, at the good gentleman's expense.

Lenny's affectionate heart rejoiced to see her, and he had so much to relate about his sickness, and the love and devotion he had received, that Jenny's hearty sympathy with it all made him quite at home and happy in her society. She had come to stay the day with him, and the kind

gentleman who had brought her in, would call for her in the evening.

She must tell him all about her beautiful country home, which she immediately began to do: You had to ride through a pleasant road, that led beside green meadows, and along the banks of a wide river, till you reached a pretty little village, with neat little cottages and a beautiful old church, all covered with ivy; and a great humming factory, that kept up its sharp murmur all the time; then you came to a long green lane, bordered with tall poplars on either side, and as you went on you saw a great old house, with an arched and carved hall-door, and wings at each end, like an old castle in a picture. There was a beautiful lawn, like smooth green velvet, in front, and a lovely flower-garden at the back, where you could sit in latticed bowers, or walk beside the ornamental beds and gather nosegays.

Mr. Graham, the gentleman with whom her

aunt lived, was very old, and sometimes he would have to sit for days in a great chair, with his foot in a rest, because he suffered from gout; but he was always good and kind, and seemed happiest when he gave others pleasure.

"I would like to go there, auntie," cried Lenny; "O! I wish he knew me, and would let me go to see him."

Miss Brenthurst smiled pleasantly.

"I am glad to tell you, that you will have your wish, for Mr. Graham kindly begged me to let you go to 'Greenslope,' as he calls his beautiful home; and I have promised that you shall pay him a visit, as soon as you are able to leave home."

This was delight enough, to fill the whole day with happy anticipations; and Jenny's society seemed better than medicine, in its effect on the appetite and spirits of the sick boy. She told him about the tame robins, who came and ate from her hand, and about the birds' nests in the

great elm tree, that she could almost touch from her bed-room window.

Old Roman, Mr. Graham's great Newfoundland dog, was another interesting subject of anecdote, and when Lenny heard of all the sagacious things he did, and how noble and trusty he was, he could scarcely wait till the day of his visit came, so anxious was he to become acquainted with him.

Then Jenny, partly addressing herself to Miss Brenthurst, related how much good the benevolence of Mr. Graham accomplished in the village near which he lived, and how many of the poor and helpless there, had cause to bless his kindness and generosity.

There used to be a company carrying on a large factory there, but owing to the track of the railroad being laid in a town five miles east of it, they took a new building there, and left the old place entirely. A great many new hands were hired in the other town, and the old ones had to

find new employment. This would have been the cause of great wretchedness and want, as winter was at hand, and the people without means of gaining a living if it had not been for Mr. Graham's goodness. He made himself acquainted with the abilities of the principal men thus rendered helpless, and finding out two or three of the most energetic and trustworthy, advanced capital to commence manufacturing in the old place on a small scale, lending additional aid whenever he saw it was required, until the venture became a thriving concern, and they had been able to give up using the heavy wagons that hauled their goods to and from the railroad town, and had laid down rails of their own, and actually ran a freight train.

"It is one of the most flourishing villages in the state now, every one says, and there is not a tavern in it," said Jenny, triumphantly. "We have a Sunday school in each of the churches, and Mr. Graham has helped the young men to

start a library and reading-room. Every quarterly pay-day he gives them a little festival, and then we have such nice singing and pleasant speeches. O, I'm sure you would like it, Miss Brenthurst, for my aunt says it is just the kind of good work that you and Mr. Brenthurst enjoy."

All this interested Lenny more than so young a boy is supposed to be by such things. Miss Brenthurst watched his eager face with hopeful pride. She knew her brother and herself could not expect to live long enough to spend all their money, and she looked forward to the time when it should fall into wise and pious hands, trained to dispense its uses as a steward of God's bounty; for she had faith to believe that such a one her favorite boy would become.

When he dropped asleep that night in his little bed an hour after Jenny's departure, he was still murmuring his plans for pleasure in the coming trip to Greenslope, and mingling his praises of

Mr. Graham's goodness with his desire to see Roman and feed Jenny's little birds.

All she had told him gave him ample subjects for conversation during the coming week, and while it was yet fresh in his mind, Dick White presented himself, shyly at first and quite abashed in the presence of Miss Brenthurst, but looking like the nice manly boy he was in his spotless summer suit of gray linen. He brought a little basket of delicious peaches from "Uncle Nep's" orchard, and repeated the old sailor's kind compliments, and an invitation to visit his little "Dry Dock"—as he called his country home.

"O, yes! I want to go there, too," cried Lenny. "I don't know which I would like best, but I think Uncle Nep's house must be a little the nicest, for it looks like a boat, and Mr. Graham's only looks like a castle."

"Simmons was talking to me about it yesterday, Lenny," said his aunt; "and I promised

that you should go on Thursday, if the weather was bright, and you continued well."

"O, won't I keep well!" he cried, enthusiastically. "I'll be so well that you won't believe that I ever was sick. You are very kind, Dick, to bring me these nice peaches. How is Mrs. Simmons and the chickens and the cow—does she behave well still? and do you ever roll Mrs. Simmons's chair for her out on the porch?"

Dick by degrees got over his timidity in the presence of strangers, and in such a splendid house, sufficiently to answer all Lenny's questions, and offer some interesting information on his own account concerning a very large Maltese cat that a gentleman had given him two years ago, and whose habits and manners were matters of much pride to her young owner.

"Mamma and I are all there is left together now, and we would be quite lonely if we did not have Penelope for company. She is such a kind, sensible cat, that when I tell her she must be

agreeable to mamma while I am gone, she winks and purrs just as good an answer as if she could talk. She meets me every day at the end of Mr. Simmons's garden when I come home, and rubs against me sometimes till I nearly tumble down, for she is very big and strong."

This favorite theme of Dick's was equally interesting to Lenny, who listened to all her peculiarities of character with the greatest delight, until Dick was forced to confess that she had done a very wicked act, though he hoped that she was sincerely sorry for it now. When this misdemeanor was narrated, it proved to be of such a flagrant character, that for a little while Lenny withdrew his interest in an animal guilty of such atrocities. She had actually killed and eaten three little yellow chickens belonging to Speckle, Mrs. Simmons's favorite hen, and had received such injuries from the enraged hen-mother that for a time they thought she would go blind, as a reward of her evil deeds. She had never done

such an act since—to be sure there were no little chickens now for her to eat, but Dick felt very sure that she had seen the error of her ways and was very sorry, for she sneaked off whenever Speckle flew over into their yard, and seemed to desire to get out of her way, as if she found her accusing glance too much for her tender conscience.

Miss Brenthurst was sorry to disturb Dick's faith in his favorite, but she warned him not to trust too far to appearance, for she had a proof of a cat's slyness she never could forget. Then she told them the story of a pretty canary which was given her when a child, and sang so sweetly that every one in the house loved to hear it. She also had a kitten, a pretty little white thing, that looked like a ball of snow as it lay rolled up before the fire on a crimson rug. Daisy was her name, and the little yellow bird was called Prim rose. Miss Brenthurst's mamma had told her that it was a cat's nature to kill and eat birds,

and so warned her to keep them apart; but some one had said that it was possible to educate that ferocious trait out of them, and she was eager to follow the plan. She began when both bird and cat were very young, and accustomed them to be constantly together. At last the bird grew so fond of Pussy that he would fly out of his cage and perch on her head as she lay dozing before the grate, and she would receive that proof of his confidence and attachment with a wink and a purr. Of course they were always watched, but one unlucky day when the kitten had grown into a cat, and the bird was all confidence and familiarity, their mistress left the room with the cage-door open, and when she returned sometime after, a few scattered feathers were all that was left of Primrose, while Daisy sate before the fire winking and licking her jaws.

This tragic story greatly impressed Lenny and Dick—both considered Daisy a very wicked creature, and lamented Primrose's untimely fate.

Penelope's misdeeds were amiable foibles in comparison, Dick thought, for she had never been taught to respect the lives of young chickens, and, seeing them wandering about in the yard, might have naturally enough mistaken them for mice.

"Yes," said Lenny, glad to discover any palliation for Puss's conduct; "perhaps that was the reason, and it's quite right for them to catch mice, you know. Cook says she wishes we had a good mouser for the lower store-room."

This amiable view of Penelope's character being agreed upon, Dick went on to tell about a pretty blue ribbon he was keeping for her birthday, and a shining little bell that was to be fastened to it. He thought it was probable that a piece of chop might please her better than any personal ornament, and she was to have that, too, he said; but he was sure she would feel proud of her necklace when she got used to it.

When the subject of pets was exhausted, Miss

Brenthurst produced a large portfolio full of beautiful pictures, and, spreading them out on the table for them to examine, sate down beside them with her work so as to be able to answer all their questions on the subject.

Thus the afternoon wore away very pleasantly, and tea was brought up for the two young people, and served on a little table, to their great gratification and enjoyment.

CHAPTER TWELFTH

LENNY'S VISIT TO UNCLE NEP—THE SAILOR'S STORY.

IT seemed to Lenny that Thursday would never arrive, it was so earnestly longed for, and so exultingly counted on by him.

Simmons had a holiday, and Miss Brenthurst had given him the use of a roomy old carriage in which his wife could ride without inconvenience, and in which there would be ample room to stow away half-a-dozen boys like Dick and Lenny beside.

All day on Wednesday Lenny ran about to try his strength; and, well wrapped up, even went out into the garden, which was in all its

summer luxuriance and glory. It seemed like a new life once more to enjoy the freedom of his limbs, and roam at will in the pleasant summer weather.

All the household were rejoiced to greet him below stairs; and cook showed him what nice preparations she was making for the next day's picnic to Uncle Nep's Dry Dock. Miss Brenthurst was sending out provisions for a garrison it would seem, and Lenny wondered who would eat the great boiled ham and roast fowls, to say nothing of the loaves of cake, and baskets of jumbles and sweetmeats.

"Do you know the—the Uncle Nep, cook?" asked Lenny, who felt curious to hear what sort of person he was about to become acquainted with.

Cook laughed, as she always did when he said anything childlike.

"His real name is Captain Bird, and he used to sail a ship on the ocean for thirty long years.

He used to call himself Old Neptune just because he was fond of the sea, and he told all the children to call him Uncle Nep because he was fond of them, too. He is a nice good-humored old man, but his voice is rather hoarse and loud; he always calls on Miss Brenthurst when he comes to town, and you can hear him all over the house when he talks."

"I shall like him very much," said Lenny, decidedly. "I wish to-morrow would come soon."

It came at last, and strange to say, Bessie had to awaken him; for, being tired by his unusual exercise of the day before, he slept very soundly as soon as he got to sleep, which was not very early, as he lay awake anticipating the pleasure to come.

As soon as he was dressed and had breakfasted, Simmons came in to say that the carriage was waiting at the garden-gate.

Cook brought out the great basket closely

packed with dainties, and Bessie carried the heavy shawl that Simmons was to wrap round her young charge in the evening. Then Lenny ran out to take a peep, and ran back again to say Dick was there with his mamma and Mrs. Simmons, too, and clapped his hands, and could scarcely wait to kiss his aunty good-bye, he was so eager to join them.

At last they were all fairly started, and the quiet old horses that jogged on steadily could not keep time to the ardent beating of Dick's and Lenny's hearts. Simmons had put them on the front seat beside him, and Mrs. White and Mrs. Simmons sate behind enjoying the sight of their delight quite as much as the beautiful prospect spread before them, as they began to leave the city behind, and get into the quiet country road.

Uncle Nep's house was situated on the bend of a broad stream, that might have been a river if the people who gave it its name had been ambitious of the distinction. It was called the

Paw-no-kee, and had an Indian story connected with it, which Simmons told them as they first came in sight of its rippling waters shining in the light of the morning sun.

An old chief had lived upon its banks, and ruled a portion of a powerful tribe there. His son, who was brave and warlike in his tastes, led the remainder out to battle with his enemies, which class of humanity seemed to be very numerous, since he was ready to look upon any one in that light, from a conflict with whom he could win any renown. While he was away making war, an aged white man came to his father's tent, and, sick and weary, besought shelter and refreshment. The old chieftain gladly offered both, and, listening to the aged wanderer, learned in return the story of a universal Saviour, and received the inestimable riches of gospel grace, he and all his household. Then the waters of the Paw-no-kee reflected a beautiful scene one autumn day at sunset. The

white-haired missionary stood upon its bank, and, raising his solemn hands to heaven, besought God's blessing and eternal light to shine into the hearts of these children of the forest, who reverently bowed in homage before his holy name. He implored the loving Father of all to receive them into the communion and fellowship of Christian grace; and, dipping up the sparkling waters of the quiet stream, signed and sealed them, in the name of the Holy Trinity, as humble believers in the Christian faith.

That was more than three hundred years ago, Simmons said, and the missionary and his disciples were mingled with the dust; but the waters of the Paw-no-kee were bright and dashing as ever, and tumbled over moss-grown rocks that made quite a little cataract, with all the glee of childhood.

The road wound up a bank, leaving the water in a little glen beneath; tall trees clustered on the brow of the embankment, and looking down

the side seemed steep, and the descent dangerous, while the stream narrowed in the distance till it seemed a broad silver ribbon with edges of emerald velvet.

Green fields full of peaceful cows, and valleys where sheep were grazing, lay beside their way. Sometimes they passed stately country-seats, with grand lawns and ornamental walks, and sometimes they came to tiny roadside cottages with children clustered around the door, staring at them with bright inquisitive eyes. At last, after an hour or two's drive, they turned into a little lane very still and shady, and as they rode along they came nearer and nearer to the sound of water rippling over stones. Then they saw a queer little house painted blue and white, and looking more like a canal-boat than a cottage. Around it was a neat white paling, and it seemed to be covered with flags, which were flying gayly in the wind, but in fact, there was only a good-sized American flag, and a blue and white Union

Jack. Surrounding the door was an exceedingly tasteful and pretty arbor, with seats on either side, and quite large enough to accommodate a good-sized party. It was curiously ornamented inside with corals and shells, so that it seemed partly a grotto, and partly a bower. At the entrance to it stood an old man with a white head, a red face with plenty of smiling welcome in it, and dressed in a suit of sailor's clothes, the glazed hat belonging to which, he carried under his arm and seldom put on.

"Welcome, little masters, welcome to old Uncle Nep's Dry Dock! And this is Miss Brenthurst's handsome little pet, is it? Well, my boy, grow up to deserve that good lady's kindness, and you can't do better than that. Dick, my man, the ducks are all quacking for joy to see you; jump out and let me lend a hand to your good mother; proud to see you, ma'am, and sister Margery, too. You are all just as welcome as I know how to make you. Simmons, you always bring good

luck, it seems. What, all those stores from Miss Brenthurst! It's like her—she's always trying to do some one a kind turn, and we will enjoy her favors by-and-by. The kettle shall go on at once, and we'll have a snack after your ride, and then you shall take a stroll and see how we get on."

All the while he talked, the rosy-faced old sailor kept smiling cordially and bobbing around from one to another, patting the boys on the head and shaking hands with the grown people, protesting his pleasure in seeing them in a dozen ways besides speaking. Lenny was already so prepossessed in his favor, that when Uncle Nep turned to him a second time, saying:—

"Well, my young master, I am truly glad to see you for Miss Brenthurst's sake, and I think I won't find it hard to like you for your own, if I know a nice boy's face when I see it;" Lenny answered in his frank and innocent way:—

"I am going to like you too. You are a very nice gentleman, to have such a beautiful place and invite me to come and see it. I told auntie I would be good, and I mean to try."

"I have not a doubt of it; and now, since you have been sick, I understand, it will be better for you to have a little lunch before Dick takes you in town and shows off the place. Just sit down here in the arbor, and we'll have it set out ship-shape in no time."

So the old sailor bustled into his cottage, and all the party, after taking off their things, sat down in the arbor, and admired the order and cheerful brightness of everything within doors and without.

A good-humored young woman, whom they all seemed to know, came out and laid the cloth in the arbor. She was the daughter of a neighbor, who always assisted Uncle Nep when he had company. Her name was Sally, and she seemed

to enjoy her part of the business as much as any of them.

When a cup of tea for the ladies and plenty of good sweet milk for the children were served, together with nice white bread and jam and fresh fruit, Dick and Lenny did not take long to satisfy their appetites, but hurried off as soon as they received permission. First, Dick proposed to visit his favorites, the ducks; and took Lenny away through the garden, where he would gladly have lingered to admire the cabbage-heads and bean-stalks, till they came to a little pond where there was a great squattering and quacking, and a whole colony of ducks were going in to swim.

"O, see the tiny little ones!" cried Lenny, in great excitement. "I am afraid they will be drowned—they are too little, Dick, oh! I know they are too little to swim all alone!"

But the ducklings soon convinced him that his fears were quite groundless—they tumbled into the water, and shook their little feathers out

proudly as they sailed consequentially beside their fond duck-mothers.

When the sunlight shone on the heads and necks of the ducks it made their beautiful colors shine like burnished gold, and Lenny thought they were quite conscious of the effect of their appearance from the triumphant way in which they carried their bills, and quacked and shook their heads with affected dignity, seeming to say to each other in their duck tongue:—

"See those two little boys! they are quite charmed with the figure we make, and really I don't wonder at it, for there can be no doubt that we are very elegant birds."

"There are some splendid turkeys up in that little yard there," said Dick, when they had stood admiring the ducks quite a time; "if you are not afraid of turkeys we will go and see them."

"Afraid of turkeys!" cried Lenny, laughing;

"who would be afraid of a turkey! Cook roasts them for dinner, and they taste so good."

"But these are not roast turkeys," said Dick, warningly; "you needn't laugh, Lenny, they are really fierce if you are not used to them."

But Lenny did laugh, and ran up to show his courage, and opened the little gate that closed the poultry yard.

Out they came strutting and gobbling like tall grenadiers, and so impressive did they look, and so intimidating was their demeanor as they came threateningly towards him, that with a cry of alarm, Lenny turned and fled to his friend for refuge.

Dick caught up a withered branch in his hand, and with it shoo-ed them back into their own domain; but not until the gate was closed upon them, and he could stand and contemplate them from a safe distance, did Lenny feel reassured.

"I do not like raw turkeys," he said, confidentially; "they look worse than eagles. Auntie

has a stuffed eagle that is not half as wicked or angry as they are."

To restore his good humor, Dick took him across such a pretty little bridge that Uncle Nep himself had made and ornamented. A tiny creek that carried the rain from the hillside, and in winter fed the streams into which it emptied its clear waters with many little springs from the rocky glens around, grew quite broad at the turn of the path below here, and Dick said Uncle Nep would let them have out his boat by-and-by; but now they had better go up into the orchard, and so they went.

It was quite rising ground, and the apples rolled away down into a little glade below when the wind shook the boughs. But it was not quite late enough for all of them to be ripe; the great hard round winter pippins kept tight hold of the parent stem yet, and turned their full cheeks towards the sun that had already streaked them with ripening crimson—while golden rus-

sets seemed to hide coyly behind the leaves, as if pleading to be left to grow more mellow and juicy.

"O, what a lovely place!" cried Lenny.

It was the first time he had ever seen an orchard, and he added thoughtfully:—

"How rich Uncle Nep must be to own so much fruit! What can he do with it all if he don't keep a store?"

Dick told him that he sold some of it to dealers, and gave away to persons who had no fruit of their own a good deal more; and then he showed Lenny what he considered a great sight himself, a regular Spanish hammock swinging between two low-boughed trees. Lenny was very curious about it, and to satisfy him concerning its uses, Dick pulled off his shoes and tumbled into its netty embrace. Then he set it swinging, and folding his arms and closing his eyes, made Lenny laugh with his luxurious enjoyment of the motion.

"Uncle Nep had brought it all the way from Mexico," he said; "and the Spanish people there used them to take afternoon naps in under shady trees in their gardens. They were not like sailor's hammocks, which are made of coarse sailcloth and hung on hooks—these were for pleasure, and the Spanish people were very fond of lying in the shade, and idly dreaming away their time in the heat of the day, he had heard."

Then Lenny climbed up into it, and had a swing, and enjoyed it so very much that Dick said he must have a little Spanish laziness in him, he was afraid.

Laughing over the new pleasure he had just discovered, Lenny ran after his guide, who proved himself an excellent one by showing him every nook and corner of Uncle Nep's little estate that would be likely to interest a young visitor, and making him acquainted with all the animals on it, from Uncle Nep's solemn old mare with a long gray face and round figure, down to

a box of pretty white mice in the barn. It took quite a while to make the rounds of all these attractions, and Sally's voice was heard calling them to dinner. It was Uncle Nep's custom to entertain his visitors in the arbor, his house being small and scarcely commodious enough to seat them comfortably. Here, then, they found the table spread, and a nice smoking repast awaiting the good appetites they had found in their morning ramble. Uncle Nep said grace in a solemn, earnest manner, for the good old sailor never did anything without meaning it thoroughly; and although he was not a very gentle or polished person, he was a sincere and devoted Christian, and never failed to bear his simple testimony to the goodness and mercy of God.

When they sat enjoying their nice dessert of fruit and cakes, Uncle Nep asked the boys how they had spent their morning, and what they thought of the place, encouraging them to talk

freely; for, as he said, he loved boys, and owed them a great debt which he could never repay.

"And I must tell you all about it," he continued; "I always tell my little friends the story of my Lucky Cruise, as I call it, because I want them to know what good reason I have to love them so much.

"You know I was a sailor many, many years. When sister Margery and I were children, our parents died. A kind lady took her home, and I was sent to learn the trade of a blacksmith, when I should be old enough, and to help about the forge meantime, and make myself useful. The man who took charge of me was harsh and cruel, and believed in a rope's end instead of reason or kind words. I suppose I was troublesome and thoughtless, and perhaps I did not learn as quickly as I should; but my master beat and swore at me so that I could not bear my life with him, and at last I ran away and went to sea. I had always thought I should

like to be a sailor, and I had no other choice. I found, as every one must find, that life on board a ship is anything but easy; still I was prepared for rough times, and being naturally pretty spry in my motions, I soon learned to do my duty, and imitated the manners of those in authority over me.

"The second mate with whom I sailed was a good-natured young man; but he drank and swore terribly, and seemed to consider it part of his business to swallow rum and utter frightfully wicked oaths, although at heart he was neither harsh nor cruel. In consequence of this, he became a most dangerous example to me, because I liked him and soon grew used to his ways, though I remember they quite shocked me at first. He took a fancy to me too, and we sailed together for four years. He often grew furious in his drink, and then no one could stand by him without feeling the effects of his intoxicated rage; but generally we got on well enough, and

I was an apt pupil, soon learning to swear and drink after his pattern.

"One dark night it was his watch on deck, and he had been more than usually bad all day. The captain had been talking to him about it, and told him it was their last voyage together, for Sam was getting too hard a case for him.

"That was his name—Sam Harris—and he had been a Sunday-school boy once, as he told me; and sometimes, when he would get over a spree, he would be very down-hearted for a few hours, and declare that he had half a mind to turn over a new leaf. O! boys, if I had only been able to do for him what a boy afterwards did for me, what would I not give to remember it now! But I was a poor heathen myself, going the downward road as fast as I could, and never pausing to think where it led me. All that day he had been drinking, and towards night he grew gloomy and full of horror. He walked up and down, muttering and shuddering, and when I

went near him to try and cheer him up a bit, he struck at me, with a fearful oath. Poor Sam! he was reaping as he had sown, and the terrible suffering that clouded his reason was brought on by years of rum-drinking and dissipation of all kinds.

"Suddenly, while we were going through the water quietly, and everything about us was still and peaceful, the unhappy man made a quick spring, and went overboard down into where the stars were shining in the dark waves—and every man of us stood as if we were turned to stone, and for a moment made no effort to save him. The man at the wheel sung out, and the captain came running on deck—a rope was thrown, and everybody seemed all alive in an instant. I don't know how I came to do it; but after the first shock I felt I must save him or die in doing it, and I threw myself over too, although they tried to hold me back.

"It all seems like a dream, a dreadful dream,

when I look back on it now. I can feel the cold water rising chillingly over me, as I sank to rise quickly, and then I can see what I could not close my eyes upon for many a long day, and that was poor Sam's face, as he rose for the last time, just beside me, and fighting free of the effort I made to save him, went down never to come up any more.

"They drew me up on deck when I found there was no hope of even finding the body, that was no doubt floating far away in our wake. When I stood upon the deck again, I shook and trembled as if I had the ague, and my heart was sick within me, for I liked poor Sam, and although I could not hear the voice of warning in his dreadful fate, I lamented his loss sincerely. And so I drank more liquor, to keep up my spirits and chase away the blues, until I stood a fair chance of following in the footsteps of the man I mourned.

"I could not make up my mind to sail again

in that ship; so I changed to a packet that carried passengers, and became second mate myself. Here I went on badly enough, for I wanted all the while to get rid of that awful-looking face, that seemed to rise out of the waves and haunt me with poor Sam Harris's last look.

"On board the ship there was a woman and her son, who were going to join the husband and father in a new country. She was delicate and pale-looking, and the boy told me that they had had a bad fever before they started; but they were the most patient and grateful creatures I ever saw; and they used to sit side by side, reading or talking to each other so affectionately, that I, being a rough fellow, not often perfectly sober, used to think I might crack my jokes at their expense, by calling them absurd names and ridiculing their piety, for the Bible was almost always the book they read, and they certainly were devoted Christians.

"If either of them had resented this, no doubt

it would have stopped; but as they only seemed to shrink from observation, and clung more closely together, the rest of the boys took it up, and made them quite uncomfortable whenever they were on deck. We were short of men, and had some new ones who were pretty hard to teach.

"I was trying to send one of them aloft, and he gave me a good deal of trouble, misunderstanding what I said; so at length I got angry and went up myself, quite in a passion. My hold was not a good one, and I went to reach over for a marling-spike, when I lost my balance and fell headlong on the deck below. I was pretty well stunned; but at first I could not feel my own injuries, the marling-spike dropping from my hand had hit the boy's mother on the head, and they were carrying her into the cabin, insensible. I was heartily sorry, and although I do not believe I was quite sober when I went up, I was perfectly so then—my own hurt was

nothing, I thought, but I was sorely grieved about the poor woman.

"She was bad enough, and they kept her quiet and did all that could be done; but a brain fever came on, and for many days she lay between life and death. All the time I never tasted liquor, and I went about with a load of anxiety on my soul I did not know how to relieve—for you must know, dear boys, that I never yet had learned to pray. At last the bruises I tried not to feel, became too much for my endurance. I could not walk or stand, my limbs swelled, and I was obliged to lie down and give myself into the doctor's hands. He called it erysipelas, and it was a dreadful disease; for a time I seemed to battle with a double torment—pain of mind and body. I lay struggling with my own sufferings, and listening for any sign of how the poor woman's illness would terminate. I suppose the doctor must have seen the trouble I felt, and may be he mentioned it, for one even-

ing I saw the boy standing by my berth, with his mild pleasant eyes fixed on me forgivingly and kindly.

"'Mother is better, sir,' he said, mildly, 'and she wants to know if you will let me do something for you. I am quite used to nursing, and will not fret or bother you, if you will let me stay with you a little while.'

"I could only answer him with a gasp of relief and thankfulness, and, waiting for no more, he set to work and put my room in neat order, with the tidy cheerfulness of a girl. I can't tell you all he did, dear boys—it seemed as if he brought a new life and spirit with him, and I no longer groped in blind despair. He was a shy and modest boy, but he knew his duty, and did it; he was a Christian, and had a Christian's hope, which he could not keep to himself like a miser's treasure. The unsearchable riches of God's love grow by division—they are the only treasures that you can increase by giving away,

and as he himself had freely received it, he thought it right to impart it as freely. And yet, dear boys, this lad taught me but little in words—it was his patient, unselfish love, his forgiveness, his faith, his energy and hopeful spirit, raised me up so that I could see and believe. There is no bitterer draught ever brewed than the cup of repentance, and I was loath to receive and drain it to its dregs, dear boys, and yet, unless we repent and believe, we cannot be saved. I had been a great sinner, and this lad, who left his own mother's sick-bed to attend on mine, pointed me to the Lamb of God, who is the only one who can wash away sins, in every act of his life, and led me right to my Saviour's feet. I saw plainly that the wretched feeling I was trying to drown by drinking rum was my own conscience pleading with me, and that if I did not listen to its voice, it would soon be silenced, and I lost to grace or mercy. O, how many times I have thanked God for that sickness; and

how many times I have blessed His name for giving me the power to humble myself and rise out of that berth on the ocean a penitent, believing sinner, bent on striving to serve and praise God.

"When I came ashore again, I found my sister Margery. I had been steering clear of her, like an unnatural brother as I was, because I knew she was a pious girl, and would be shocked at my ways. I introduced her to the mother and son who had done so much for me—and when she pays me my quarterly visit here, she always goes to see them too."

"May I see them, if you please, Uncle Nep?" asked Lenny, eagerly.

"Yes, my dear young master, certainly you may."

"O, I'll like that kind boy!" said Lenny, impulsively, but Dick whispered:—

"He isn't a boy now, you know;" at which Lenny looked quite disappointed.

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

LENNY'S DRIVE TO ELM VILLAGE.

UNCLE NEP put the whole party into the carriage, and sate himself in amongst them, taking Lenny on his knee, to economize room; then they took a delightful drive of a mile or two out of the way of the stream and through smiling grain-fields, ripe for the harvest, till they came to such a beautiful little church, standing under the shade of some giant elms, and beside it a neat cottage, within a luxuriant flower-garden.

"O, I would like to live here all the time!" said Lenny; "the country is so much prettier than the city, and this is the prettiest country of all—is it not?"

The carriage stopped, and they all got out except Mrs. Simmons, who waited till the door should be opened, that she might be lifted into the sitting-room. In answer to the first knock, a pleasant old lady appeared to greet them warmly, and said that her son William was in the church, where the children were singing their anniversary hymns. There was to be a great jubilee in a week or two. A good gentleman had gived them funds to erect a school-house and pay the teacher, and this was the anniversary of its foundation they were preparing for. Mr. Thornley was to be present, and they expected a very delightful time.

She offered to accompany them into the church, where the rehearsal was nearly concluded, and then they might see the children and hear them sing a piece, perhaps.

Lenny kept wondering who this good lady was, and whether one of the children would not turn out to be Uncle Nep's good boy, for, despite

Dick's words, he clung to the idea of his being a boy still.

As they went over the fields through a smooth path, edged on all sides with wild rose bushes, Simmons took the carriage round by the road, and waited in front of the church. There they found the village children singing sweetly, and a good kind gentleman came out and welcomed them with much kindness. That was the last piece they were in time to hear; and the young people being dismissed, Mr. Warren, who was the clergyman, accompanied his mother and their friends out to the porch, where Mrs. Simmons in the carriage was very glad to see them.

"I have brought our boys according to custom, sir," said Uncle Nep; "all that come to our little 'Dry Dock,' must come over and look at 'my good boy,' and see how he still continues the work he began so well. Yes, Master Lenny, this gentleman was the little fellow who won me from ruin and despair; and although you are

very young to learn such an important lesson, I am sure you must see that a good boy can do God's will and grow up to be a noble man."

"Yes, sir," said Lenny, seriously impressed; for, young as he was, he realized that Mr. Warren had been desirous of serving his Heavenly Father, and that his work had been blessed by the smile of God's favor. He looked from the benevolent old lady to her excellent son, and felt a strong inward drawing towards such a life of faith and love.

Meantime the good clergyman and his mother begged that they might have the pleasure of entertaining the little party in their cottage; but Uncle Nep, remembering the promised boat-ride, said he would accept the invitation for the children's festival, and endeavour to bring his friends to enjoy it with him; but Sally and the tea kettle would wait for them in the arbor, and they must all have a row in the "Brown Gypsy," his newly painted boat.

The prospect consoled the children for leaving the pretty church and parsonage and Elm Village behind them, for Mr. Warren had warmly and kindly invited them all to come and see the children that day week, and Lenny felt sure his auntie would like to be there too.

The "Brown Gypsy" was the pink of all boats, and never could be excelled: so Dick believed, and Lenny joined him heartily in the same faith. They talked of its beauties all the ride back, and Lenny, who was by this time quite reconciled to the good boy having grown to be a good man, felt sorry that Mr. Warren could not share their pleasure. At last they reached the Paw-no-kee, and Uncle Nep launched the Gypsy, and all but Mrs. Simmons, who was tired by this time, had a most delightful row. Mrs. White had a sweet voice, and sang such pleasant hymns, that Lenny could never grow tired listening to them.

As they went down the smooth current Dick and she kept time to the oar-strokes, and Uncle

Nep joined in with his full bass, that had a faint echo of the roar of the sea in its deep tones.

O! it was a lovely afternoon, but the sun would begin to sink and the treetops to grow ruddy in its glorious light, although Lenny would have been so glad to have had him set more slowly this afternoon than usual.

"We must keep faith with our kind lady, Miss Brenthurst," said Uncle Nep, pulling for the shore; "we promised to send our little gentleman home in the daylight, and there is no time to lose. Sally will be waiting; and tea must be taken, and good-byes said for this time. God bless us all, and spare us to meet again as happily!"

As he said, tea was ready in the arbor, and peaches and cream to crown the repast. Sally waited on the young people, who from the fresh air and exercise had no difficulty in finding appetites.

Mrs. Simmons had rested from one journey

and was soon ready for another; the carriage was packed, not forgetting the basket that had held cook's dainties, which was now returned full of delicious peaches; all were enthusiastic over their day's enjoyment, and full of thanks to the good old sailor who had received them so hospitably. Mounting his quiet old horse he rode beside them for a mile or two, and then stood watching their carriage as it rolled down hill out of the sound of the Paw-no-kee towards the city, that by-and-by began to appear in the distance.

Miss Brenthurst had felt unaccountably lonely without Lenny, and really had been forced to struggle against an indefinable depression, when she saw how empty the room seemed, that owed its life and brightness to his presence. Both she and her brother were waiting to receive him, and when he sprang rosy and delighted out of Simmons's arms, and began his description of the day's events without a word of preface, they

listened with pleased interest to all he said, and scarcely noticed the slightly confused manner in which his eagerness to tell all led him to mix the ducks and turkeys, the boat and children's festival, with the dreadful death at sea, and the clergyman and his mother.

They were still wrapt in the interest of the recital, glancing at each other in silent commendation of the correct views the boy took of all he had seen, and perhaps a little partially admiring the intelligence and appreciative faculties of one so young, when Lenny's face changed, and he suddenly became constrained and silent.

While they looked at him in surprise, the alteration explained itself—the boy's eyes were fixed on the door; theirs followed the direction, and saw Clement Blye standing smiling and bowing there.

"Why, you're as noiseless as a cat, Clement," cried Mr. Brenthurst, with something like displeasure in his tone. "I don't wonder the child

was startled; I declare it is enough to startle any one to see such a spectre-like appearance."

"I am sorry I cannot be more boisterous in my way," said Clement, smiling, but contracting his brows, and sending a sharp glance at Lenny for a single instant. "I was told by the servant that I should find you here, and so I came."

"Quite right, my dear Clement," cried Miss Brenthurst, rising to welcome him, for she feared that her brother's manner might appear harsh. "We were listening to Lenny's account of his visit to the country, and it was so pleasant to watch his enjoyment and enthusiasm that we grew oblivious of everything else. I must ring for Bessie now. He seems to have grown suddenly tired and sleepy. Good-night, my dear boy. We must think about the festival at Elm Village; perhaps Uncle John may be able to go with us."

"Uncle John!" echoed Clement, in a sharp suppressed tone, and looked from one to the

other with that keen glance that seemed to spring from under his brows like a knife from its sheath.

Miss Brenthurst did not reply until Bessie appeared, and Lenny, whose manner had lost all its vivacity and brightness, murmured his good-night and withdrew. Then she turned towards him and said, quietly:—

"You know my brother and I lead lonely lives, or rather we did, before Providence placed Lenny in our way. We both feel that the child has opened new and delightful channels of sympathy and interest in our contracted natures; and we feel that we owe him a place in the hearts and home he has gladdened. He must look up to us in some way, and being as it appears without relatives, we have adopted him as our nephew."

"Not legally, you know, Helen," said her brother. "I think it would only be right to do so in a binding way that would be recognised by

law. If we wait a year without being able to trace his connections, I think we are justified in doing that."

"Certainly," said Miss Brenthurst, acquiescing eagerly; "let us do anything that will seem to give us a firmer hold on him, for he grows dearer to us daily; and I am sure I could not love him any more if he were actually related to us both."

Clement watched their faces narrowly, and yet preserved sufficient control over his features to hide his thoughts—they only betrayed an absorbing interest in the theme; a curious smile, that it was his habit to assume as a sort of mask, covered all the rest.

Mr. Brenthurst felt uncomfortable while discussing home topics in his cousin's presence. He did not like to acknowledge to himself the estimate he placed on Clement's jealous, sordid nature; but he could not disguise the uneasiness he endured when the young man put that shallow

smiling face of his into any project where their dear child's happiness was concerned.

"Helen has been telling me about the origin of that cotton factory you did some business with last week, Clement," he said, to change the theme; "they are doing thrivingly, I hear, and it was all a benevolent scheme of Mr. Graham's. A noble character, a truly noble character he is; and his wealth gives him an opportunity of gratifying his best feelings."

Miss Brenthurst glanced persuasively at her cousin.

"Will you make one of our party if we go to his place next week, and from there to Elm Village, to be present at a children's festival? You cannot conceive how much pleasure I should feel in your taking an interest in such things. A young man with your talent for business must one day become rich, and then your influence must tell either for good or evil; it would be very agreeable to me and to your Cousin John,

if we could draw you more completely within the circle of our interests and sympathies."

Still smiling, Clement seemed to take a moment's thought; then he answered quite readily and with much apparent pleasure, that he would be sure to go; he was glad that he had the opportunity of improving under their tuition, &c., &c.

For the rest of the evening he was particularly talkative and entertaining, discussing a great variety of subjects, and never once alluding to Lenny or anything connected with him. It was quite late when he went away, and both his cousins acknowledged with much satisfaction that he was improving, and might yet become as good and amiable as he was useful and reliable in business.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

LENNY'S DISAPPEARANCE.

LENNY did not suffer the least inconvenience from the fatigue of his day in the country, and the pleasure of looking back occupied his mind till the projected visit to Mr. Graham's drew near. Simmons had done his best to train and restore the plant that had spelt his name so prettily, and although many of its delicate tendrils were broken and crushed beyond hope of reviving it was yet living, and growing back into something like its former freshness.

Lenny, who did not know the cruel treatment it had met with from Clement's boots, was busy

with his gardening under Simmons's direction, the afternoon before the contemplated trip to the country. Simmons had been rolling the walk, and Lenny, with his little knife, was cutting away the overgrowth of some spreading vines, gathering the lopped branches into his little barrow, and trundling it down to the gate that opened into the street where Simmons's house was.

Standing or loitering about this place, he observed a low-set dark-complexioned man, roughly dressed, and altogether unattractive-looking, who seemed very anxious to be agreeable to him notwithstanding, and nodded and grinned every time he appeared at the gate. "There is a man at the corner that seems to know me," he said, coming up to Simmons, after a dozen of these silent recognitions. "Would auntie allow me to ask him in here and see what it means?" Lenny spoke quite seriously; he was not at all attracted to the man, but thought it his duty to understand the secret of his interest in him.

"I'll go and see him myself," said Simmons; and he went accordingly.

He came back in a minute, saying there was no one in sight, and that Lenny must have made a mistake. But Lenny was quite confident he had not, and although the man did not reappear, the impression he had made remained, so that even in the evening, he repeated to Mr. Brenthurst the odd circumstance of the grinning man, and was so decided about the signs of recognition he gave him, that Miss Brenthurst afterwards suggested to her brother, that he might have some recollection connected with the strange person in his past life, which were too dim to be recalled clearly.

The next day was bright and sunshiny, and all the household was astir early, preparing for the unusual circumstance of Miss Brenthurst and her brother leaving home together, for a holiday in the country. Lenny had asked permission to carry Jenny Garland a bouquet of his own peculiar

flowers. As he ran through the lower hall, cook, whose temper sometimes became a little ruffled with a bad draught or slow fire, called out sharply,

"Master Lenny, please go by the side door, and let the back remain closed till my oven gets hot."

His hand was already on the latch, it was partly opened when she spoke; but after a second's irresolution, he closed it again and went by the way she said. As he came back into the house, he took the largest and reddest rose he could select, and stopped to offer it to her.

"I am sorry you have to stay at home and bake cakes," he said kindly; "I wish you could have a nice time too, cook."

"Bless your kind heart!" exclaimed cook, smiling in restored good humor, "I can get a holiday for the asking, and it does me good to see your bright little face, almost as much as if I was going myself."

So the party set off for Greenslope in high

spirits, and after a delightful drive reached Mr. Graham's grand old house, whose comforts and delights were rather overlooked by Lenny, in his rapture at the kind reception offered by Roman, who extended his paw and his friendship immediately, and showed off all his wonderful accomplishments, to the unspeakable pride of Jenny.

Mr. Graham was a most hospitable old gentleman, and nobody could be kinder than his good housekeeper, or more agreeable than Jenny. There was so much to be seen before dinner, and immediately afterwards they were to drive to Elm Village to the Festival, so no time was to be lost. Jenny undertook to show all the sights to Lenny and Roman, and they had already made two or three excursions, while Miss Brenthurst was enjoying the view of the slope and river from the great drawing-room windows. It seemed impossible to exhaust the list of delights, when Mr. Graham introduced another

into the foreground, by leading out a little Shetland pony, which was all ready to give Lenny a first ride, and was so gentle and reliable, that his aunt could have no objection to the treat.

Mr. Graham drove Mr. Brenthurst and his sister over to the factory at their request, and Jenny and Lenny and Roman, and Thistledown the pony, began to enjoy themselves on the lawn.

In the midst of laughing gayly, and clapping his hands with excitement and pleasure, Lenny became aware of a figure behind the ornamental trees on the other side of the road, and a pair of sharp bad eyes watching him closely.

"Who is that?" he cried quickly, turning suddenly towards Jenny; "it must be the man at the garden-gate."

"There is no one at the garden-gate," repeated Jenny. "What do you mean, dear?"

"I mean our garden at home; but he's gone now, I don't see him any more;" and slapping the pony lightly with his bridle, he started him

into a gentle trot, which was so delightful as to stop all further conversation except exclamations of pleasure.

At dinner the party were joined by Clement Blye, who was determined to be pleased with everything, and whom Mr. Graham received kindly as the relative of his guests.

The factory, the school, the reading-room, and its excellent library, all formed subjects for conversation, and the carriages were at the door before the pleasant meal was finished.

"I will put on Lenny's things, Miss Brenthurst," said Jenny, looking about for him in the hall; "he was here a moment ago, and ran out with Roman—don't wait—I'll find him;" and she hurried off to do so, calling as she went.

Miss Brenthurst was detained a few moments by Mrs. Garland's finding that the door of the room in which the guests' things were laid had been locked by somebody, and the key gone. Such an unaccountable thing filled her with

wonder, and she looked about on all sides for an explanation. Mr. Blye, who was just descending the stairs, suggested that it might have been the result of accident. He had gone up to find his hat, and now hurried down to say that they would be ready presently.

When they did find the key—curiously enough it lay on the carpet at their feet—and had opened the door, dressed and gone down, they found one carriage already driven off with Jenny, Lenny, Mr. Graham, and Mr. Brenthurst in it.

Clement remained, as he said, to drive the ladies; and when Miss Brenthurst evinced surprise that the boy should have gone without his light coat or gloves, he offered quickly to take charge of them, and professed himself to blame in the whole matter since he had urged the gentleman not to lose time—knowing as he did that Mr. Graham was the important feature in the festive occasion.

So they all went off together, and never had

Clement Blye been so agreeably entertaining. "His Cousin Helen's advice would always be sands of gold to him," he said; "and she had opened a new and delightful prospect of future usefulness to him; he was a poor clerk now, but by-and-by fortune might smile on him, and with her favors he should possess the desire to use his riches wisely and well. And what," he asked, "what was wealth with benevolence without a desire to do good to our fellow-beings?" He looked very seriously, and seemed so deeply impressed by his own newly awakened philanthropy as to regard all mankind and nature with new and awakened interest, which gave his cousin great satisfaction, and some little remorse for not having done more to arouse this latent good feeling.

At last, after a pleasant two hours' ride, they came in sight of Elm Village, and found the beautiful grove around the school-house decorated with garlands of flowers and appropriate mottoes.

As they drew near they joined Mr. Graham's carriage, and as soon as both vehicles entered the enclosure, a procession of children in holiday dress drew near singing and strewing flowers in honor of the kindly Christian gentleman, who had done so much in their behalf. Jenny's head looked out of the carriage window.

"Please let Lenny see it, Miss Brenthurst," she whispered; "let him stand in front of the carriage."

Not quite understanding her, the lady turned to her cousin.

"What does she say, Clement?" she asked.

He suddenly grew deeply interested in the management of his horses, and made them rear so as to rather alarm the rest.

"Pray keep them quiet; had we not better get out here?" said Miss Brenthurst. "I am curious to know what Jenny said of Lenny. Yes, Clement, if you please, we will alight now."

And they did, but were so surrounded by the

school children and Mr. and Mrs. Warren, the good clergyman and his mother, that Miss Brenthurst's attention was distracted for a few minutes from the other carriage, and only recalled by Uncle Nep, who was Mr. Warren's guest on the occasion, and now, all smiles and bows, came up to inquire after "the young gentleman, Master Lenny."

"Where is he, Jenny?" asked Miss Brenthurst, looking about her on all sides.

"Where is he?" cried Jenny, echoing her words by way of reply. "I don't see him—he must be in the carriage."

Miss Brenthurst turned very white, and caught Mrs. Garland's arm quickly.

"He was left behind," she said, in a low voice; "and I do not understand it. Where is my brother?"

He was called, and came instantly. He looked annoyed and disturbed at the oversight, but not at all frightened.

"It was the pony, depend upon it," he said. "I suppose he took the opportunity of your getting ready to steal another ride, and found us gone when he got home. I'll drive back for him."

"No, no!" interposed Clement, eagerly; "allow me to do it, Mr. Graham relies on you to help him through with the addresses, and I will not be in the least missed. I'll start at once."

And despite Miss Brenthurst's objections, which she could not explain satisfactorily to herself, although she uttered them, he was off in the lightest carriage, dashing out of sight in great speed, as if bent on serving his cousin whether or no.

"O, why did Mr. Clement say I must go with Mr. Graham and Mr. Brenthurst?" exclaimed Jenny, distressedly. "I begged him to let me wait for Lenny, but he said you would bring him with you."

"There was a mistake somewhere," said her

aunt; "for Mr. Blye told us that he was with you, and we never looked for him at all."

Miss Brenthurst said nothing; but her uneasiness and an indefinable dread of something to come oppressed her more and more every moment.

That was a painful afternoon to her. She was too good and too unselfish to disturb the pleasure of others by her own forebodings and distress, so she strove earnestly to subdue each outward expression of trouble, and tried to listen to all Mrs. Warren and Uncle Nep told her about the progress of the Church, the Sunday school and the Everyday school, both of which institutions owed so much to the benevolence of good Mr. Graham. At last it grew late enough to return, and no sign of Mr. Blye.

"He has found the boy all right, but does not think it worth while to ride back. Remember it is a two hours' drive," said their considerate host; but Miss Brenthurst could not command her

fears, and when she perceived that her brother began to share them, she grew more restless and uncomfortable than ever.

Heartily glad to be once more on her way, she took leave of the good friend at Elm Village, and, riding back with her brother as driver, urged him to put the horses to their speed.

When they came in sight of Mr. Graham's house everything was quiet, and old Roman lay asleep on the great porch. It argued well for Lenny, they all said; but when they alighted and inquired, their worst fears were confirmed. The child had not been seen at all. Mr. Blye had arrived two or three hours before, and made all sorts of inquiries in a breathless way, then driven off again to be seen no more by the household, though the general supposition was that he had gone to the city to set the police to search.

"Is there any water near?" asked Miss Brenthurst, her voice trembling with horror at the idea she had suggested.

None but the river, and that was not easily accessible; no, it could not be explained, though the strictest search was instituted. No clue could be discovered; though they looked in all directions, and sent inquiries out on the faintest chances, not one single shred of information, however faint, could they glean of the lost Lenny.

What a gloomy journey back to the city, and what a miserable uncertainty and gloom awaited them! Clement was there, and surprised them by the anxiety and energy he displayed; he had already made all the preliminary arrangements of a thorough search, and offered a large reward to any one who could bring any tidings of the child. Distressed and unhappy as Mr. Brenthurst was, there was nothing to be done that Clement had not attended to. He was forced to acknowledge that he had done the young man great injustice in the past, and desired to repair it by showing him confidence in the future.

Yes, Lenny was truly lost; not a scrap of intelligence in any way relating to him could be gained; it really seemed as if he had been suddenly wiped out of existence, and there was nothing left of the little boy except the great sorrow in the hearts of those his simple loving nature had won to prize and cherish him.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

LENNY'S PRISON.

AND where was little Lenny while all this anxious sorrow and distress were felt on his account? In a railroad car flying over a Western road at a swift pace, seated side by side with the strange dark-faced man he had already begun to doubt and fear.

When Miss Brenthurst left him on the portico after dinner he thought he would just run down the lawn to take a look at Thistledown, who was being led away to the stable by the lower road.

He had passed into the little clump of trees that lay between the lawn and the hedge he meant to peep over, when the man, who said his

name was Jerry, came towards him, smiling and bowing and making so many motions to attract and please him, that he paused bewildered by them all.

"I know where Perry is, little master," he said, speaking persuasively, "and I want you to come and get him; he won't come with me, he don't know me well enough, but he'd be so glad to see you. Do come, Master Lenny, and get poor little Perry."

"Where is he? Let me go and tell my aunt!" said Lenny, divided between eagerness and anxiety. "I want to see him—O dear little Perry!"

"No, don't stop, it will only take a moment, we'll be back in time—come on!" exclaimed the man, and at each word he drew the boy with him farther into the wood. "Let me carry you, then we won't lose time or keep your aunt waiting;" and as he spoke he caught the boy up in spite of his rather indignant remonstrances; and

LENNY KIDNAPPED.

covered his mouth with a handkerchief to prevent his making any outcry. Lenny soon ceased to struggle; indeed he only made a motion or two, when his head fell helplessly on the shoulder of the strange man, with his face looking very white, his eyes half open, and his chest heaving laboriously with the effort of breathing under the influence of the drug Jerry had forced him to inhale so as to become unconscious. In this state he carried him through the by-ways till he gained the open highway, where a gig was standing, whose horse's reins were held by a hard-faced woman.

"Give him here," she said, sharply; "you've been long enough about it, I'm sure. Now get in, or we won't get away in time for the train."

On the knee of this unprepossessing female, Lenny half sat and half lay for the next hour, and when they reached the outskirts of a strange town at the end of that time, he recovered his consciousness, but was too faint and sick and

giddy to collect his scattered senses clearly, or realize what was occurring round him.

They drove straight to the station of the Western Railway, and the woman, getting out, bought the necessary tickets, while the man held Lenny, and kept talking to him soothingly about going to see little Perry.

"I want to go back to my aunt and uncle," Lenny would answer faintly, and with a great effort, for the effect of the powerful drug was still strong on him. He had a sort of half-defined consciousness of something painful occurring, and a fear of how it would end; but beyond this his weakened powers could not extend, and he lay breathing painfully on the man's shoulder, wishing that somebody would come to his rescue, yet scarcely knowing from what he desired to be delivered.

The woman looked at him, as she jumped in again with the tickets in her hand.

"He won't give you any trouble," she said,

coolly, "and you wouldn't need me, even if it was safe for me to go. I'll go back with the buggy, and tell my story to the man I hired it from, to prevent suspicion. You needn't be seen at all, for I have kept you out of the way so far, and all you have to do is to keep straight on, according to directions. I'll stay and settle with Elye."

Lenny heard and partly understood her words; that is, a dawning suspicion of evil presented itself to his slowly awakening mind, and a wordless terror of the name he had just heard as being connected with it. He had but little pause given him to consider in—the train came snorting and puffing in sight, the man jumped down, wrapped him in a linen coat, and putting a straw hat of a common sort on his head, left his pretty one with the woman—then carried him quickly across the platform into the cars, and they were steaming and shrieking on their way again.

The man had left his handkerchief with his companion, and taken another, which was highly perfumed with cologne. With it he wiped Lenny's face and brushed his hair, and, leaving him for a few moments, returned with a glass of lemonade, which he insisted on his swallowing to the last drop. Having done so, Lenny soon fell asleep, and the rest of the journey seemed like a troubled dream to him.

When he awoke clearly, he was in a small dark room, meanly furnished, and had just raised himself in a cot-bed, which was at the foot of another, wherein the man called Jerry lay sleeping. He was very weak, and, looking at his arms, he saw that they were thin and wasted, as if he had been ill.

There was a little table beside his bed, and on it stood a bottle, a cup and spoon, and a small jug of water.

Although everything seemed strange and repellent to his feelings, it was not entirely un-

familiar; he seemed to have seen it before, under the influence of a dream, as well he might, since he had been lying in a fever in that very room for nearly a fortnight.

But Lenny did not know this; and so he strove to rise, and, finding that he had no strength, sank back on his pillow, and cried like the poor little desolate creature he was.

By-and-by the man woke up, and began to yawn and stretch himself, wearily muttering something about it being late and his being lazy. At last he rose, and appeared fully dressed, as if he had tumbled down just as he was the night before. His face looked red and his eyes swollen, and his temper seemed anything but cheerful.

At first Lenny was so timid that he shut his eyes and tried to appear asleep; but by-and-by his courage grew stronger, and, struggling up once more, he spoke, with all the feeling his wretchedness could convey:—

"Please, sir, take me home to my aunt and

uncle—I don't want to be here. I don't want to stay, and I'll never say I do not like Mr. Clement again, if you only let me go."

Jerry laughed long and loud.

"The young one's cute enough to see through a stone wall," he said, half to himself. "Why, who said anything about Mr. Clement, I want to know? Who is he, I wonder?"

Something in his manner of speaking, in the coarse swagger and loud way he had, seemed to kill all hope or trust in the boy's heart; he fell back on the bed and lay quite still, and it seemed to him that under all the bright sun that now began to shine into the dreary room, there was no such wretched child as he.

"No one can hear me, no one will help me," he thought—and he put his thin little hands before his face, and cried very bitterly.

But there seemed to be a soft little voice speaking away down in his own breast. He lis-

tened, and by-and-by it became plainer and more audible, and these were the words it said:—

"Poor and friendless though I be,
Yet my Saviour cares for me.
Wretched and forlorn I roam,
Still He points to Heaven, my home."

This was a verse of a little hymn he had been singing to Bessie the day before the journey to Greenslope, and now it came back to him, through what seemed a long distant time, and with a meaning it had never had before.

It was only the beginning of many better and nobler thoughts that followed. All the teachings of his aunt—all the prayers she had uttered over him—seemed to blossom into fruit in that one hour, as, clasping his hands, he lifted his young heart silently in faith and trust to the All-powerful God, who, even in his desolation, saw and could help him. He had not prayed long before he felt courage, then patience, and

then hope, all waken in his young soul. He would not give up to misery—he would endure, and he would try to get away, with God's help. O, what a long and fervent prayer he uttered, without speaking a single word! He had discovered the power of God, because he found himself utterly friendless, and with no strength but in Him.

His happy, happy life with dear Miss Brenthurst seemed like something too beautiful to be real; but all she had taught him of the Saviour, awoke in clear, distinct, unalterable belief, and sustained him in his helplessness and sorrow.

Strangely plain and real now became what had been before a mere confused mass of floating remembrances. He could recall his mother, and separate her quite clearly from Miss Brenthurst; he could see the journey they had taken together, the last place they had stopped at, and remember all she said, and who had been with her. O, what a longing possessed him to run to his dear

friends with his newly-found knowledge, and how bitter it was to know they were separated so hopelessly! But Lenny had prayed for courage, and meant to keep it; so he nursed it with hope and prayer, and was quiet and unmurmuring, biding his time to escape, for to that end every faculty in his youthful brain centered.

Jerry was not abusive to him, neither was he kind. Sometimes he would laugh in his coarse, loud way at something suggested by his words, but generally he was silent, and preoccupied by his own thoughts. They were only stopping there for a little while, Lenny gathered, and would go on again to some more distant point as soon as they received instructions from some one at home.

Lenny was a prisoner; he could not leave the little room and another equally small apartment opening from it, which comprised Jerry's lodgings. His meals, of plain but sufficient food, were brought there, and when Jerry went out

the doors were locked securely on the outside. Here he stayed for hours together, in the light or darkness, utterly alone, and suffering the terrors of a highly-imaginative nervous organization. His experience of fire rendered it horrible to him, and the idea of his room breaking into flames while he was locked in it, was unbearable; then the voices in some adjacent rooms often grew loud and fierce, and sometimes he heard violent scuffles and blows. But constantly, as soon as nightfall came, and the lamps were lighted outside, he would become conscious of the clinking of money, and certain words that he had once before been accustomed to hear. What were they? He did not understand them at all; but he knew his mother would sit and cry, and that it was his father's voice they would hear above the rattling of dice and the cries of chagrin or triumph.

There was one window in each room, and from it he found out that they were living up stairs

in a large dirty-looking house, and that a deep damp yard, fenced in by tall and equally dingy buildings, was the only look-out there was. Jerry's trade and his father's seemed to be the same. Day after day the sounds became more and more familiar, and the calm delights of his dear old home seemed to float away behind the clouds of despairing gloom that rose around the present.

Yet the child never ceased to pray, and faith kept alive his sinking heart, for he believed that God was near, and remembered the seed he planted in his beautiful garden, that had to wait for the warm air and rain to ripen it into growth and verdure.

Sometimes it was very late when Jerry tumbled into bed, and once the day was dawning clear and bright before his staggering feet were heard outside the door, and his clumsy hand fumbled with the key. Lenny peeped up to look at him as he passed his little cot, and the expres-

sion of his face was hideously distorted by drink and passion. Kicking the things around, he swore frightfully about his losses at cards, and tumbled on the bed with curses against the winners, half-uttered and choked by heavy snores. Lenny lay trembling, and his heart beat so loudly that he could scarcely breathe; but it was not with fear. No—hope and joy animated his breast once more, and he almost sobbed out a prayer of thanksgiving, for the drunken wretch had not removed the key from the door, but had only closed it with a bang, and was now in a deep intoxicated slumber, unconscious of anything around him. Lenny lay awhile, to be perfectly sure of it, then noiselessly and tremblingly arose. His own pretty clothes were gone long ago. It was cold weather now, and a good stout coarse suit had been provided by Jerry, for his and a young German, who never spoke to him, were the only two faces he had looked on since he entered the room. As he put his things on, a

sudden and paralyzing fear seized him. Suppose he should be seen and brought back! Suppose he could find no other door open, and would have to return of his own accord! But he had only one Friend, and to Him he turned in prayer.

"O, God, my dear Father in Heaven! help me to get safe home!" he said, and he said it with all his heart, and found strength in the utterance. Softly he moved the door—like a cat he stole out into the great long entry he had never seen before. He looked about him in bewilderment—a staircase was at the other end, and down it he went without a sound. One, two flights, and he came to an oil-clothed entry, where the same German was beginning to scrub. At sight of him, Lenny darted back and hid himself under the stairs. A pause occurred, while the man beat the mat outside the door, and Lenny held his breath, lest he should betray himself by a sound. Then the man leisurely

passed him with his bucket, and knelt down with his back towards him at the other end of the hall. It was his opportunity, and Lenny seized it as wisely as if he had been a dozen years older. He waited till the noise of the brush on the canvas should drown the sound of his footsteps, and then, with a silent cry to God for help, he fled away, and was out in the streets of a strange city.

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

LENNY'S WANDERINGS.

IT was growing dusk when, faint and foot-sore, Lenny knocked at the door of a poor-looking house in the suburbs of the city where he had been kept in confinement so long. There were flat brick-fields round about it, and pools of stagnant water; it was ill-built and poorly painted, being one of a partially-finished row erected for the accommodation of laborers and their wives, and having none of the conveniences or adornments of a better class of dwellings; yet Lenny had picked it out from many a fine one, because of the glimpse of kindly home-life within.

Misery had made him cunning, and he was slow to ask aid, lest he might meet with an enemy who would deliver him again to the bondage from which he had escaped; so he had wandered as far away from that quarter as he could get, and watched about to see some of the inmates of a house before he would trust his fate in their hands. In this one there was only a thin half-curtain on the single front window, and a good sort of woman was revealed, making a slice of toast at the comfortable fire for a sick girl on a settee. She answered Lenny's knock with the bread on her fork, and seemed surprised at his delicate face and refined manner.

"Are you lost, my boy?" were the first words she said; and when he answered in the affirmative, she took him in directly, without another word, and accommodated him with a seat at the fire.

"Get warm and take a mouthful before you

go any further—then we'll try and set you right," she said.

The tears stood in Lenny's eyes at her kindness; and being both tired and hungry, he thankfully availed himself of it.

While he ate and drank the wholesome food she set before him, he tried to decide whether he dared to trust her with his story; but an inexplicable dread of the one he blamed as the cause of all his misery sealed his lips, and all he could say was that he wanted to go to the next town, which he knew was on his way homeward.

The woman regarded him with a look of surprise, not unmixed with suspicion.

"What is such a little fellow as you doing so far from home?" she asked.

"O, please tell me the way! I'll let you know all when I get there, please tell me the way, ma'am, if you will be so kind!"

His distressed manner, and the earnestness of

his words, were all in his favor. The woman considered awhile, and then said:—

"My daughter is going through that way to-morrow; she's just been married, and going back with her husband to where we used to live. If you really want to go, she'll take you. But I hope, my boy, you are not trying to run away from home?"

Lenny protested with such earnestness that he only wanted to go home, that after a little more dubious head-shaking the woman seemed satisfied, particularly as the sick girl on the sofa seemed greatly prepossessed in his favor. He seemed so weary, that his kind hostess put a comforter on the carpet near the stove, and told him to lie down, which he was not loath to do, and soon fell sound asleep. When he awoke the young married person and her husband were there. They looked honest and kind, and belonged to the better part of the working class. They accepted Lenny readily as a companion, although the man

seemed to think he was a "little too close," as he expressed it, and advised him to tell them something about himself, as no doubt they could help him.

"Wait till I get out of this town," said Lenny, mysteriously; and seeing that he attached so much importance to leaving the city, silently they yielded.

They were very near the depot, and as the first morning train went through, they all got on the cars and took their places. It was very frosty, and in kindness for the poorly protected child the young woman wrapped him in a spare cloak she had, drawing the hood over his cap. It was a singularly fortunate kindness on her part, for it was scarcely done when Lenny's frightened eyes beheld the terrible Jerry walk through the car looking on all sides, but glancing lightly at the bundled figure beside the young woman, as if taking it for granted that it was her child. The boy neither moved nor

stirred, nor could he find power to do so—all his strength went up in a silent thanksgiving as the car started with a shrill scream and whistle, and he had another glimpse of Jerry standing brooding and disappointed on the platform as they passed. The young woman, whose name was Mary, turned round and looked at him to see if he were comfortably fixed.

Happening to touch his hand, she started back, exclaiming:—

"Why, Terry, this poor child is like ice! I—I wish he could have a drop of warm wine or something."

"No, no, thank you! I am quite well now," cried Lenny, gladly. "O, I am so happy I am on my way home!" and he burst into a shower of happy joyous hopeful tears that relieved his over-tried spirit, and made his pale little face shine brightly, like the sunlight after a summer shower.

He now gained courage to speak more freely,

and desired them earnestly to set him on his way to the city where his aunt lived, saying he had been taken away wickedly, though he dare not yet tell them his friends' names.

After a little consultation the husband and wife decided to put the affair in the hands of a brother and sister they called John and Hattie, and so, troubling him no more about his affairs, they took the best care of Lenny, and landed safe and comfortable in their own place before nightfall.

It was quite a decent house, cleanly and tidy in outward appearance, and larger than houses occupied by people of that class usually are.

Mary, who had not seen it before, was delighted at its superiority.

"Why, it's a grand house!" she said, looking up admiringly at the outside. "I never thought we could afford such a place."

"Why, you know, John and Hattie have a lodger on the second floor, and they manage it

so that it don't cost any more than a small one would."

As he spoke he opened the front door, and immediately a sharp querulous little bark was heard, at which Lenny's heart gave a strange joyous bound.

"That's the lodger's dog, you must not mind him, he's a pretty playful little fellow," explained Terry, and the same moment a very beautiful spaniel appeared at the head of the stairs, while the parlor door was opened, and a clear light shone out into the passage.

'Bow, wow, wow!" went the dog, not angrily —just inquiringly—as he looked down with his sharp bright eyes to be sure of who was below.

Lenny stood an instant gasping for breath; then, uttering a wild cry of joy, he shouted "little Perry—little Perry!" and throwing himself on the stairs, rolled over and over in an ecstasy of joy, with the little dog clasped to his bosom.

Meantime the astonished Terry and Mary

looked on in silence, until the people within ran out and welcomed them heartily.

"But what's this!" cried the good woman of the house; "where did you find this boy? Come in, my dear. Why, bless us and save us, this is the pretty little gentleman that loved my little Johnny! Do you know me, dear? O, tell me about him, Mary, where did you find him? John, this is our good lady's little boy! O, dear, what a surprise!"

Yes, Lenny's wondering eyes did not deceive him; it was Mrs. Murray who held him in her arms, and with all the gratitude of her warm nature embraced him over and over again, while he was trying to find breath to speak.

At last his tongue was loosened; he was among friends, and he felt safe; sitting down amidst them all, with every wondering eye upon him, and the caressing dog clasped in his arms, he told his sorrowful story, and, amid sobs that shook his whole frame, gave expression to his

gratitude to God, who had so wonderfully rescued him from his miserable confinement.

"And the dog!" cried Mrs. Murray, when she could command herself to speak beyond exclamations of joy and thankfulness; "look at him licking the child's face and hands so affectionately."

"He is my old Perry; mamma brought him in a ship. I know all now; I was so frightened by that fearful fire that it made me forget; but now I know, we ran away from my cruel——"

The boy stopped, for his mother's teachings were remembered yet—he was never to accuse his father—he was to strive to forget all that was evil and wicked in him, and pray for him always. While these thoughts pressed on his mind, Mrs. Murray, who had hastily run from the room, returned with a foreign woman in a Swiss cap, with a broad good-humored face, in which only wonder was expressed at present.

'Babette!" screamed Lenny, at the sight of her, and flew into her arms.

She caught him with a cry of astonished pleasure, and hugging and dragging him with her, ran to the foot of the stairs, crying, in a mixture of French and English that was almost unintelligible,

"Franz, Franz, come quickly, and see our child! Mademoiselle Leonore's child! Ah! Heaven is too good! too good! and I am too happy!"

A Swiss of respectable appearance answered this call, and, falling into a scarcely less excited state than his wife, embraced Lenny with great affection, which the boy as ardently returned.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

LENNY'S PEACE AND JOY.

MR. and Miss Brenthurst did not allow the sorrow they felt in the loss of the boy so dear to both, to in anywise lessen the full measure of their useful charities, or detract from the loving benevolence of their beautiful characters.

Always ready to further the interests of the deserving, Miss Brenthurst had done much to improve the circumstances of Dick and his mother, and found the greatest pleasure her anxious heart could know in fulfilling the wishes of her lost favorite. Everything that could throw the least ray of light on the mysterious

circumstance of his disappearance was sifted to the last grain. A woman who had once been employed in the family with her husband, whose name was Jerry Burke, and both of whom had been dismissed for dishonesty, had been arrested and examined because she had driven through Greenslope in a strange way that day, and had been seen lurking in the neighborhood of the house; but not a syllable to convict her of any part in the business had been elicited; and although her proceedings were strictly watched, nothing connected with them gave the least clue to suspicion.

Simmons had told the story of Lenny's alarm, so had Jenny; and although it seemed that this unknown person must be the guilty man, nothing to lead to his discovery could be found, and so the matter rested. Meantime, Clement's sympathy and anxiety were so great as to make Miss Brenthurst quite forget her former objections to his callous and selfish nature, and en-

deavor by every present kindness to make up for past suspicion and neglect.

And yet it was a sorrowful household. Every servant in it daily recalled the dear boy's gentle traits of kindness; and cook was never tired of enlarging on the last words he spoke to her. She would bring the great rose he gave her, pressed between the leaves of her hymn-book, and tearfully display it to Miss Brenthurst, as one cherishes and weeps over mementoes of the dead.

It was a beautiful winter's day, when the sun was lighting up the icicles in the garden into a brilliant set of miniature rainbows, and making the snow-covered beds so very bright that you had to wink as you looked on them. Cook was busy in the kitchen, for there was a more than usual amount of cooking on hand. It was Clement's birthday, and his cousin had asked him to dine with them, although, as her sad face ex-

pressed, she did not much enjoy the prospect of entertaining company.

Cook was doing her duty, though he was no favorite with her, as she confessed, but Miss Brenthurst had said, "Prepare a good dinner;" and so it was in progress of preparation, when Bessie ran in breathlessly—crying out:—

"Cook, there's a whole carriage-load of people in the hall, and I am almost wild, for I think they know something of Master Lenny. Shall I show them into the room, where Miss Brenthurst and Mr. Clement are?"

"I would," cried cook, becoming equally excited. "O, Bessie, do you believe it? can there be any news? O, do run and listen! I am crazy to hear."

The drawing-room door was thrown wide open, and with many curtsies Mrs. Murray and her party entered, at Bessie's suggestion. Clement rose, so did Miss Brenthurst, who met her humble friend with characteristic kindness. The

Swiss woman and her husband were introduced, and Clement started back with a dismayed and guilty face. Mrs. Murray had her eyes on him, and stepped before the door.

"Please stay here, sir," she said, quietly; "we will need you to set Miss Brenthurst's mind at rest. O, here is her brother;" and she stepped aside, curtsying to Mr. Brenthurst, who had just entered.

Then she began the story, which, taking into consideration the Swiss's imperfect knowledge of English, it was thought best should be told by her; but which both husband and wife certified to, by a constant series of energetic nods as it progressed.

They had been in the service of Mr. and Mrs. Merton, sister and brother-in-law to the lady and gentleman then present, and had travelled and lived with them in various ways almost ever since they had been abroad. Mr. Merton had become a little wild, and left his wife alone the greater

portion of the time, while he went off to some very gay places, where there was a great deal of gambling and excitement. The poor lady was a most unhappy and very delicate being, at times so ill that they feared she would die before his return. But once, when he came back and said he was completely ruined, he behaved with such dreadful cruelty to them that she and her child were often in danger of their lives.

The Swiss and his wife had heard her say that she had relatives in America, and to them, at this juncture, they implored her to appeal, for her child's sake, if not for her own. But she appeared strangely averse to yield to their entreaties, although she acknowledged they had always been kind and good to her.

At length one day, in a fit of drunken fury, he struck her, so as to cause her to fall and receive a serious injury. This last outrage decided her, and, gaining courage from despair, she listened to her humble friends' entreaties, and left

him secretly, carrying her child with her. They crossed the ocean and came to America, where both the Swiss and his wife had found ready employment in a toy and wicker-work house; but Mrs. Merton, dreading to meet her family without having some clue to their feelings towards her, wrote appealingly to a cousin, Mr. Clement Blye, as they had since learned his name to be.

Both husband and wife, who were closely and attentively following Mrs. Murray's narration, here pointed towards the conscience-stricken young man, whose white and troubled face bore palpable evidence of his identity with the person they named.

He came in answer to the letter—the story proceeded—but what passed between them no one could say, except that his account of her relatives' feelings towards her appeared to plunge the unfortunate lady in the deepest despair, and her grief and dejection, when he left her, were

heart-breaking to her humble but devoted friends to witness.

Some time passed in this way; he came frequently, always seeming to urge delay and discourage an appeal to her brother's and sister's forgiveness. The arguments he used were a secret to the Swiss and his wife; but they saw their effect was to make their poor lady frantic with distress and misery. Sometimes he gave her money—sometimes he would promise to use new efforts to soften her friends; but after this unbearable delay had lasted for months, Mrs. Merton had suddenly gained courage from despair, and written directly to her family, that she was coming home to die with them, imploring them to receive and pity her innocent child. Not waiting for an answer, she had started, begging those she left behind to pray for her success, and promising that if she were not fortunate enough to win the compassion of her brother and sister, she would return to them.

They never saw or heard of her again; they knew no English in which to make inquiries, and she had carefully concealed from them her brother's name. They could only hope that she had been welcomed so kindly as to forget all past sorrow and trouble, and found herself and child so comfortably settled as to no longer need their services, and perhaps her people were too proud to allow her to communicate with humble souls like themselves.

As she listened, Miss Brenthurst had sunk weeping on her knees, and her brother's arms in vain endeavored to raise her from her suppliant attitude.

"Leonore! O! my sister, my beloved Leonore!" was all she could utter; and her cries of grief and agony, as she recalled that death in the burning lodging-house, must have been a terrible retribution, as they rung in the ears of the wicked author of so much misery.

But no — a bitterer still awaited him, when

Mr. Murray, having stayed without in the carriage till now, burst in with Lenny in his arms, and gave him to her wounded spirit, like a solace sent from Heaven.

Yes, that was the greatest sting the jealous, sordid Clement Blye could know on earth! All his plottings and strivings were in vain—all his deceit and sinful scheming went for nothing; for, safe in his dear aunt's arms, the innocent object of all his foul snares nestled, happy, thankful, and blest, beyond the power of words to convey.

And thus his wickedness was rewarded. God had overruled evil for good, and used his efforts to inflict misery as the means of producing joy.

For the sake of becoming the sole heir of his relatives, he had made himself a disgraced man and an outcast; for while the tears of sorrow were mingling with bursts of gladness in that little household, Mr. Brenthurst, with his eyes averted, as if he could not look on such a family

Judas, had opened the door and motioned his unworthy cousin to leave the house for ever, which he did without a word, too glad to escape the punishment of the law due to such crimes as he had committed, to attempt to justify himself by any new deceit.

Miss Brenthurst's tears fell fast for the sad, sad fate of her lost sister, and her smiles of happiness, as she looked on Leonard—no, always her "little Lenny,"—in whose face that darling sister seemed to live again, were a balm to her bowed spirit, and joy triumphed over grief, and peace and thanksgiving lifted every heart above the clouds of past trouble.

There was a regular jubilee, in which every soul in that household shared. Simmons and his wife, Dick and his mother, Uncle Nep and Mrs. Garland and Jenny, were all brought together, to share the glad rejoicing, and there was not a

heart in all the joyous company that did not join in Lenny's simple prayer:—

"I love God more than I can tell, because he has made my dear home my *real* home, and I hope he will teach me to be as good as I am happy; and so I must begin by forgiving everybody who caused me any trouble, and loving everybody. O! how many they are who give me pleasure, and make me thankful and humble, too!"

THE END.

Francis

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Lenny, the orphan

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